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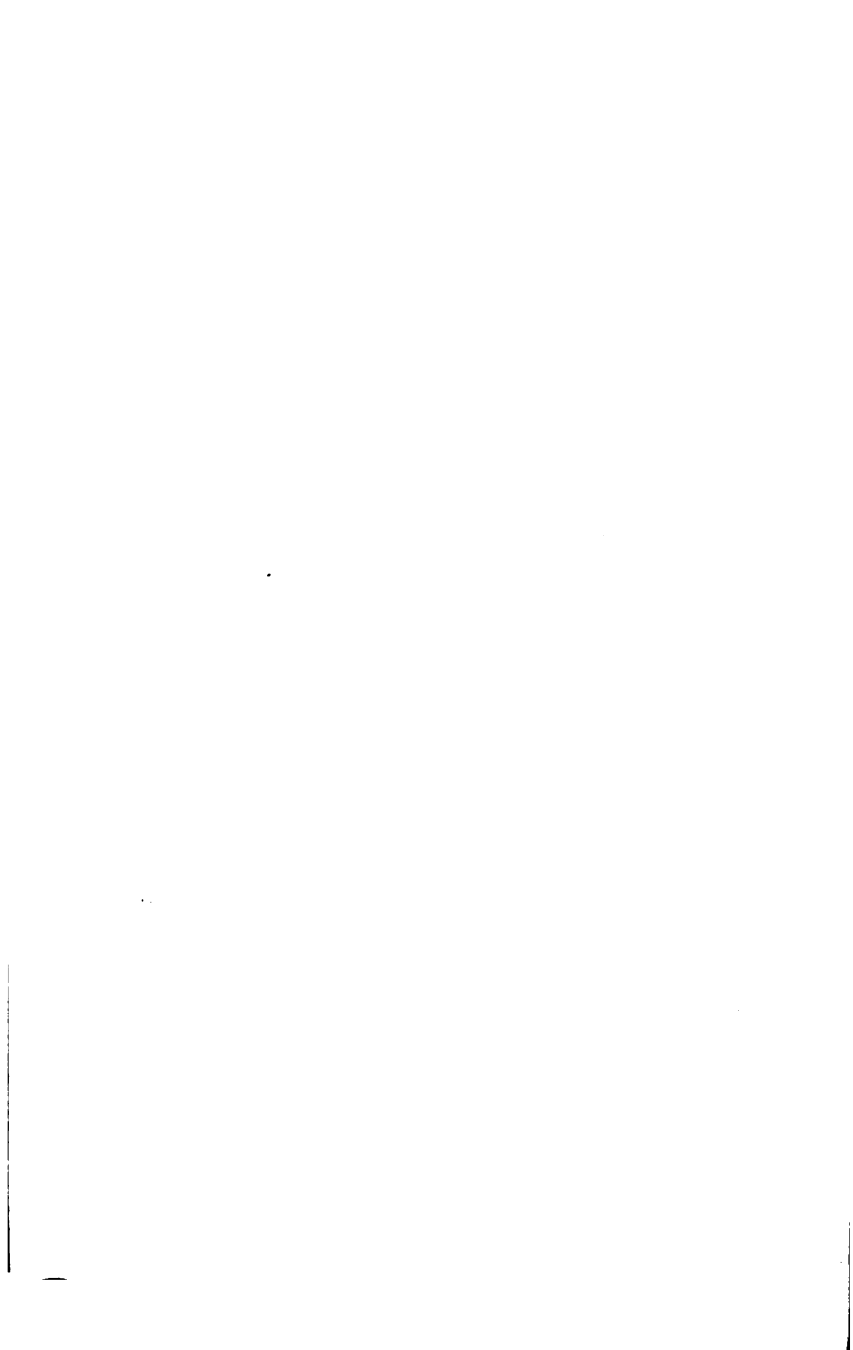
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*GENTLEMEN ALL AND
MERRY COMPANIONS*

RALPH BERGENGREN

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BOOKS BY MR. BERGENGREN

Gentlemen All and Merry Companions

David the Dreamer, *The Atlantic Monthly Press*

Jane, Joseph, and John: Their Book of Verses, *The
tic Monthly Press*

The Comforts of Home, *The Atlantic Monthly Pres.*

The Perfect Gentleman, *The Atlantic Monthly Pres.*

The Seven Ages of Man, *The Atlantic Monthly Pre.*

GENTLEMEN ALL AND MERRY COMPANIONS

BY

RALPH BERGENGREN

AUTHOR OF "DAVID THE DREAMER," "JANE, JOSEPH, AND JOHN :
THEIR BOOK OF VERSES," "THE PERFECT GENTLEMAN," ETC.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS

By JOHN SLOAN

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Gentlemen All and Merry Companions



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TO MY WIFE



MEHITABEL

IT was in May, 1825, or there about, and on a tropical island, conveniently out of the course of ordinary navigation, ten sleepy pirates sat in a row in front of a stout little stone fort. Each had a comfortable enough chair to sit in. The *Tender Polly* (owing to the mistaken enthusiasm of her lookout) had recently held up and appropriated a shipload of furniture, clothing, and other necessities sent out by a New England missionary society to its workers in the Sandwich Islands. Each pirate had thus become possessed of a nice red rocking-chair which some of the more fastidious had improved by the addition of nice white tidies secured in the same desperate venture. They were all smoking in a desultory, half-hearted fashion, and since, for the past fortnight, there had been no wind on Nonesuch Island, the smoke of their ten pipes floated motionless in the still air under the tall palms that stood near the fort like a half dozen big, tired feather dusters stuck upright in the sand till the next sweeping day.

Having nothing particular to do, the ten pirates all wore their carpet slippers. They sat motionless, save for the monotonous movement of their ten rocking-chairs ; but now and then one of them uncrossed his legs, crossed them again in the opposite direction, and yawned extensively.

Silence had settled over them for perhaps an hour and conversation was apparently exhausted. But humanity abhors silence as nature is said to abhor a vacuum, and the ten pirates were very human. Now one of them, after an uncommonly protracted yawn, stretched arms and legs simultaneously and ejaculated: "Heigho! But I wish I knew how to read." He was a burly caricature of a man with a large, round nose projecting like an island from a sea of red hair, neatly plaited into a number of spiky cues, which started high up on his cheeks and had led the more jocular among his companions to christen him Red Whisker. He had a roving black eye which matched well with a roving black disposition, both just now becalmed by an extreme mental weariness. At one side of him sat a comrade in a tattered blue shirt — sun, wind, and rain had made it a delicate baby blue — who opened small eyes like a pig's and closed them again sleepily whenever any one spoke. On the other side of him a rambling skyscraper of a fellow with long yellow mustaches, the ends of which were in curl papers, moodily tickled a mosquito bite on his ankle with the sharp point of his cutlass. Pirates, you understand, led such an active life that a bored pirate was an especially piteous object.

Presently a fourth pirate, noteworthy for a long, horse-like jaw, above which his small nondescript nose seemed hardly equal to supporting the large brass nose-ring that adorned it, relit his pipe and stared vacantly over the flat, uninteresting surface of the ocean.

"Funny, ain't it, but I was just a-thinkin' o' the same thing, Whisker," he remarked in a drab sort of tone. "Here be we — ten of us — all alone on this confounded uninhabited island." He used several adjectives to describe the island, but "confounded" may perhaps serve to epitomize them. "We can't always be a-drinkin' and

a-gamblin' and a-carousin' same's that young jackass" — and here he indicated by a cock of his thumb the very latest recruit, a brown-visaged youth who sat miserably by himself rocking back and forth in his cane-seated rocker — "same's that mutton-headed idjit thought we was when he left his happy home and jined the company. We can't always be a-rovin' of the seas and a-burryn' of treasure ; and when we goes ashore its gettin' mighty tiresome dodgin' the revenue. When I was a kid," he added, "I didn't see no sense in schoolin' : no sense whatsoever ! And here I be, a-sittin' in a fifteen-dollar, red paint an' varnish rockin'-chair and nothin' to do but smoke my pipe and blink my peeper at that blame old ocean. And he spat disgustedly as far as possible toward the hot, white beach.

A fifth pirate uncrossed his legs, crossed them again, and wriggled his toes until the carpet slipper of his left foot hung suspended on the larger of them, and the place where the heel of his stocking needed darning was instructively visible.

"Heigho !" he exclaimed, repeating the weary note of Red Whisker from force of example. "*And* to think of all them good books that we've had to heave overboard !"

That set them all talking about books for a few moments ; but it was in a dull way, and the conversation soon languished, as needs must when none of them had ever read one. They relapsed again into moody reverie, broken by no sound more interesting than the steady creaking of ten pairs of rockers on the hard sand. It was all very solemn and unexciting, and a pirate's life seemed to each of them the most monotonous of existences ; but what could a fellow do without education ?

Curiously enough, not one of these pirates had the slightest education whatever. Some of them had been

born pirates and had never had any educational advantages ; the fellow with the ringed nose had run away to sea young, become a cabin boy, and drifted into the profession, very much as nowadays a man drifts into literature ; Pig-Eye and Yellow Mustaches were of European origin, whose parents, themselves quite illiterate, had emigrated to America and settled on farms inconveniently distant from schoolhouses ; and the youngest of the three just happened to be the son of a pessimistic old widow who didn't believe in education anyway. Yet taken all in all, they were far from being stupid fellows : they could sail by the sun and stars, and knew a great many things not set down in text-books ; and they were wise enough to bury their treasure, except such ready money as they might lay hands on, because they knew that the sharpers whom they dealt with ashore would get the better of them in any bargain involving arithmetic.

(This, by the way, is perhaps why pirates in general buried so much of their treasure, although, of course, some pirates were much better educated than those in this story.)

And they were also clever enough to have remained profitably in business some time after many older and better known pirates had retired, and the newspapers were congratulating themselves editorially on having entirely extirpated piracy.

So they rocked back and forth methodically, moving their chairs occasionally to keep in the shade of the palm trees. Red Whisker himself nodded and nodded, and finally went sound asleep. It seemed as if the last word had been spoken and nobody would ever try to hunt up another ; but after a while the youngest pirate broke the silence.

"I wanted to go to school," he said, "but father wouldn't let me."

The others opened their eyes and peered at him incredulously out of the corners ; they were too bored even to take the trouble of turning their heads.

"Listen to him," grumbled Pig-Eye sarcastically. "'Father wouldn't let me!' Why in—er—why under the sun didn't you kill father and go to school anyway?"

"*I'd* a—made him walk the plank—*I* would," growled a seventh comrade who had not yet spoken. He was a fat pirate, and protected his bald head from the sun with a pink parasol, once the property of a fine lady who had no more use for it. "Drat it! 'Over you go, father,' *I'd* a said ; and then off to the schoolhouse with my books in a little leather strap. I've seen 'em," he added bitterly, "with their little, innercent faces all slicked up, shiny-like, a-swingin' of their little books just so happy an' contented." And he, too, relapsed into moody abstraction, after first moving an extra chair where he could put his feet on it.

There was another long, silent period. A white cloud, at first hardly larger than a man's hand, appeared on the distant horizon. At length Yellow Mustaches rose languidly, twirling his curl papers ; he looked at the white cloud ; then he moistened his finger and held it up in the still air.

"Gen'lemen all an' merry companions!" he cried, "Wot's th' matter of cruisin' north an' capturin' a schoolma'am? Eh? If a three-year-old kid can learn to read, what's the matter of us learnin'? We've got plenty o' time, an' all we needs is somebody what knows a bit more than we do to start us goin'."

The optimistic words struck fire. The nine other pirates leaped to their feet with alacrity. They were practical men and here was a practical suggestion ; they would have cheered it to the echo only that they remem-

bered in time that on Nonesuch Island there was no echo. They held no council, and made no definite plan — time enough for that on the broad ocean ; but they kicked off their slippers, got into their boots, and sped back and forth like ants between the fort and the cove that concealed the *Tender Polly*, their rakish schooner. They carried provisions, arms, ammunition, liquor, and the other accessories of voyage and adventure ; and as they worked they sang a savage ditty in their rough, discordant voices

*“ The good old man, he walks the plank.
His step is firm but slow.
Ho, boys : ho !
He hits the ocean with a spank.
His wife and little daughter,
They march above the water,
And in, kerplunk ! they go.
Ho, boys : ho !
And in, kerplunk ! they go.”*

The wind was rising, and half an hour later it softly rocked ten empty rocking-chairs on Nonesuch Island, while far out to sea the *Tender Polly* drove northward under every stitch and darn of canvas.

Mehitabel Perkins taught school for a living at the Four Corners down on the Cape. She was the only child of Josh, or Joshua S., Perkins, whose yearly income from his cranberry farm would hardly have supported them except for the help of Mehitabel's modest stipend. Secretly the old man often thought of his daughter's marriage as the Golden Road to an assistant who should help

make the large but poorly managed farm more profitable. But he was a kind as well as an indecisive parent, and, as the pretty school-teacher had so far remained free and unromantically happy in her chosen duties, he made no effort to force her inclinations. Indeed, it seemed likely that he would have also to force the inclinations of the much-desired suitor, and for this task the old man lacked both courage and diplomacy.

For Mehitabel was pretty only in the chivalrous sense that prescribes the term for all New England school-teachers. A plain, honest girl, with a rectangular figure and a talent for authority (inherited, it may be guessed, from her dead mother), she took life in a matter-of-course way and thought little of love except as a handy verb to conjugate. To be sure, she rarely lacked a big boy to carry her books for her. But this devotion regularly faded away after the big boy graduated, and left Joshua S. Perkins shaking his head in secret disappointment.

The Four Corners was a lonely but convenient place for a schoolhouse, being the central point of the large, sparsely settled district that supplied its handful of scholars. Four roads met there, and Mehitabel's way to school lay along the loneliest of them. It ran through woods, with here and there a peep of the wide ocean ; or again it followed the curve of the shore through sandy, treeless spaces, turning inland at last to reach the schoolhouse. On this road stood an inn, the "Maid and Bottle," which bore an unpleasant reputation, and which Mehitabel often made a little detour to avoid on her way to and from her duties. Queer characters resorted there sometimes to discuss the landlord's brown ale or stronger spirits, and these discussions often became animated to the point of physical violence. The "Maid and Bottle," in short, was a resort for the idle-minded of the whole county, and

its landlord, Simon, throve cheerfully in a down-heel sort of fashion.

At about ten o'clock on this spring morning Sim unusually busy. He had brought out all his chairs to afford comfort to a number of wayfarers, all of whom were quite new to his experience. Although the visitors inconspicuously clad in somber black (such rain-coats, in fact, as was then worn by foreign missionaries on similar occasions), and conducted themselves with an exaggerated degree of decorum, there was about them an inexplicable air of freedom and gallantry. The unusual angles at which they wore their shiny black hats hinted, for example, at unfamiliarity with the best custom of the tradition. And as they had approached the inn, their rolling steps and tanned faces suggested that these distant visitors had but recently come on shore after a long voyage on deep water. Their speech, too, betrayed a noticeable indifference to the ordinary restraints of grammar, though in addressing each other they graciously used the title : " Reverend."

The leader of these strangers, called by his companion " The Reverend Mr. Williams," bespoke the landlord to order ten glasses of rum and water. He was a stout man, with a round, purple nose, and wore his tall top-hat tilted so far forward that his red whiskers seemed to protrude from under the very brim of it ; in fact, he presented a curious optical illusion of being a man with his head backward.

" Rum and water ! " he repeated with marked emphasis. " An' mostly rum ! Stiffen her, you long, lank, good-for-nothin' son of an easy-goin' mermaid — "

" Easy, easy there, Reverend Mr. Williams," interposed a companion, who wore his hat very much on one side and absently twirled the ends of a long flaxen mustache.

He turned to the indignant landlord and explained suavely : " It's his jolly little way of speakin' to the onregenerate heathen, that is. Never you mind him, nephew, but pipe all hands and hurry the crockery. Preachin' is dry work," he added and spun a shining piece of money dexterously on the rough wooden table.

The landlord of the " Maid and Bottle " needed no further incentive. He " piped all hands " — a freckled boy, an old stableman, and a couple of untidy wenches from the kitchen — and together they set ten chairs in a row under the spreading chestnut tree, their peculiar guests watching these preparations with deep and undivided interest. Then they settled themselves comfortably, and the Reverend Mr. Williams raised his own glass of rum and water.

" Now, boys, a song," he commanded jovially, and several of the company, after first clearing their throats by a swallow of the tempting beverage, started in merrily.

" The good old man, he walks the plank,"

they sang,

" His step is firm but slow.

Ho, boys : ho !

He hits the ocean with a—"

The reverend gentleman with the flaxen mustaches interrupted this ditty, which seemed to annoy him.

" Stow the hymn, brethren," he cried ; and with that he drove his elbow sharply into the ribs of his next neighbor — a person whose somber garb was somewhat incongruously relieved by a shining brass nose-ring. The movement passed along the line and the hymn stopped suddenly. In the foliage of the chestnut tree a robin piped

cheerily and a number of swallows gurgled along the row of now solemn reverends. The man who had interrupted turned to the landlord.

"Hark ye," he said earnestly, "what's the sailin' directions to the nearest schoolhouse?"

Simon looked puzzled, and the reverend person with the brass nose-ring came to his assistance.

"Here be we," he said, making a generally inclusive gesture. "And there be you," pointing at the puzzled landlord of the "Maid and Bottle." "And what we be a-askin' of you is this: How be we to get from you to the nearest schoolhouse?"

"We loves to see the little kidlets at their books, bless 'em," explained another, taking off his hat and mopping his bald forehead with a delicate lace handkerchief about which still lingered a faint odor of violet perfumery. "We love to see 'em on their way to school with their little books in an innercent leather strap, bless 'em."

"Crazy," thought Simon to himself. And with this sage conclusion, he directed them to the Four Corners.

The afternoon dragged lazily, as afternoons will in June, and Mehitabel Perkins, having at last finished the final example for the arithmetic class and proved conclusively that a certain James, in dividing his only apple with a certain John and Mary, was generous with an almost repulsive mathematical exactness, closed her desk while the scholars trooped out into the sunshine. Each scholar carried his or her books and slate in a neat leather strap; but the inevitable big boy lingered behind on the doorstep. There Mehitabel joined him, and stood for a moment methodically making up her mind that every-

thing had been locked up securely. Her own road, like the others, turned immediately into deep woodland and lost itself in sun-flecked shadow, and, as she looked forward blithely to the homeward walk, she wondered if she should again see the black schooner that had aroused her morning curiosity in a cove just beyond the "Maid and Bottle." She gave the door a final shake and turned toward her escort.

Suddenly they both stood perfectly still and gazed at each other in the surprised way of persons who have simultaneously received a nervous shock. A child's cry rang out from the woods at the left, followed by protracted weeping ; a like note was repeated from the woods at the right, and then from the forest in front of them. A dozen children began crying piteously all at once in different parts of the woods, and no one person could have decided which way to run to their assistance. The sounds had something of fear in them ; something of anger ; and something, too, of the long-drawn I'll-tell-my-father *motif* of a youngster attacked by an older person. Then the cries died away in the distance and silence once more settled over the sun-flecked woodland roads. But Mehitabel instinctively squeezed the big boy's hand, and he in turn, with mingled feelings of happiness and trepidation, squeezed Mehitabel's.

At this moment four men came into the clearing, each from one of the four roads. They were dressed in black, and were, in short, no other than the Reverend Mr. Williams and three of his fellow travelers. The Reverend Williams as he approached Mehitabel politely raised his hat.

"M'am," he said, "be you the school-teacher ?"

"Be," said Mehitabel gravely, "is a lamentable failure of grammar. I *am* the school-teacher."

The Reverend Mr. Williams was apparently overjoyed to be corrected.

"She *am*!" he shouted exultingly: and he grabbed Mehitabel about the waist, lifting her bodily from the ground. The poor girl, thus suddenly embraced, experienced a mingled sense of tar and offended modesty. She wriggled vigorously, and the big boy pounded an indignant tattoo with his fists on the stalwart back of the Reverend Williams. It was a useless effort. One of Mr. Williams's companions grasped the big boy by the legs and pulled these necessary supports from under him; another sat on his stomach; and the third calmly robbed him of his strapful of books. Then they tied his hands and feet neatly together and stood him up against the side of the schoolhouse.

Meantime from the four roads appeared six other men in black. Their arms were full of school-books, and they all surrounded Mehitabel, who still wriggled in a determined but now discouraged manner. The Reverend Mr. Williams, somewhat flushed from his exertions, set her again on her feet, but he hooked one large forefinger into her waistband in a manner that made escape out of the question; Mehitabel was made fast, so to speak, and she stood still with calm dignity, but without attempting to conceal her contempt for her captor. To the wretched big boy, trussed up against the side of the schoolhouse, the ten abductors seemed to be holding a serious discussion, but Mehitabel's wriggles had taken them out of earshot. Finally two of them separated from the rest, and, having broken one of the schoolhouse windows, disappeared into that little temple of learning.

They were gone only a moment, and then climbed back, carrying the teacher's chair between them. They put it on the ground and all together they compelled Mehitabel

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THE PIRATICAL SEIZURE OF THE RECTANGU
SCHOOLMISTRESS

to sit down in it ; there they fastened her with stout ropes. Then one of them grasped the chair at the back, two others grasped it each by one of the front legs, and together they lifted her, swinging very much as if suspended in a hammock. So they started on a smart trot down the road, and the other seven, their arms full of textbooks, trotted cheerfully after.

The sun-flecked wood closed behind them. And as the big boy stood stiffly trussed up against the wall, the echo of a song came back to him, growing rapidly fainter and fainter :

*“ His wife and little daughter,
They march across the water,
And in, kerplunk ! they go.
Ho, boys : ho ! ”*

They built Mehitabel a small, comfortable two-room habitation of her own just outside the fort. Mehitabel herself chose the site and superintended this operation, her native talent for authority soon asserting itself after she had been once satisfied that the ten pirates meditated no personal violence ; and this assurance came easier because she was neither conceited nor romantic. Except for that one wild embrace of Red Whisker — an ebullition which, he later explained, was due rather to the abstract excitement of grasping instruction in person than to any less ennobling passion — her captors had so far treated her with respect, consideration, and even a touch of awe by no means unpleasant to a serious-minded young woman. They had been unquestionably surprised, for example, when Mehitabel expressed an objection to their habitual profanity, yet they had considerably striven to change,

in her presence, a habit which they now saw was inconsistent with the calmer moods of scholarship. She had even persuaded them (although unfortunately there was no soap on the island) to wash their faces, a custom which they had come to think rather unnecessary because they often went swimming in a deep cove just north of the fort ; from her own little house Mehitabel could sometimes hear them, of a hot summer afternoon, laughing and splashing each other with the cold, salt water.

She had been about two months domiciled on Nonesuch Island. Often, as she watched the red sun go down into the copper-tinted ocean, she thought pensively how with each day the long summer vacation on the Cape was drawing nearer its end, and wondered practically who would take her place at the Four Corners schoolhouse. Sometimes she laughed, a little cruelly perhaps, at the memory of the big boy's expression as he stood stiffly against the schoolhouse wall looking after her as she rode away into the woodland with the reverend strangers for company. Concerning her father, patiently tending his cranberry farm, she thought more poignantly. Yet after all Mehitabel was not only young but an enthusiastic school-teacher ; now that she had got used to her strange pupils they greatly interested her ; and she was no longer afraid of them, although her attitude toward Red Whisker remained pointed and discriminating.

Pirates, like the rest of us, however, are only human. During the first month they had thought of little but the serious side of their studies — and the alphabet, if one takes it seriously, is an absorbing topic even to persons so highly educated as the philologists. Then, too, the ten pirates, although not of the artistic temperament or training, had undoubtedly been calmed emotionally by the same characteristics in Mehitabel that had tempered

the admiration of a succession of big boys. For the purposes of unhampered devotion to study they could hardly have chosen better, although the choice, as we have seen, had been more or less accidental. But the good living of Nonesuch Island — far different from the pork and pie traditionally devoured by Joshua S. Perkins and his dutiful daughter — were combining with fresh air and unlimited sunshine to change Mehitabel. Although she took long walks over the island, the corners were beginning to disappear from her rectangular figure.

Mehitabel (to put the fact plainly before the indulgent reader) was getting fat ; and this accretion, so often fatal to female beauty, was in her case distinctly becoming. What would happen if it went too far is, of course, quite another matter, but Mehitabel was a tall, large-boned young woman, and could, esthetically speaking, afford to carry more weight than most. Her cheeks, too, were turning temptingly pink under her tan. And in one of them when she smiled, as she did frequently at the mistakes of her pupils, there had lately appeared a little indentation which might perhaps be best described as a baby dimple.

To complete this description, and at the same time answer a natural question that the feminine reader may already be asking, Mehitabel was better dressed than at any other time in her life. The bald-headed pirate had gallantly handed over to her the pink parasol, and with it a large trunk which had fallen to his share of the booty in a now forgotten episode of his professional labors. For the most part the contents of this trunk, which had belonged to a lady of evident good taste as well as considerable means, had been of slight service to him. Mehitabel, although not without shedding tears of sympathy over the pretty garments (until she suddenly realized that they might spot), had gratefully accepted them. She had,

therefore, dresses for all occasions and lacked only the occasions.

But of the general effect of these changes Mehitabel knew nothing. There was only one mirror on the island, and that was a pocket one carried by the tall pirate with the long flaxen mustaches, which he now wore in curl papers only when he was asleep.

In the two months that had passed since the disappearance of Mehitabel from the Four Corners the ten pirates had progressed in their studies with surprising rapidity. They had mastered the alphabet, after considerable violent discussion of the foolishness of having each letter come in two sizes. They knew the multiplication table as far as the fives. And they were beginning to read short selections from their First Readers. Within restricted limits the educational experiment was already a success — but, alas ! this very access of knowledge had a peculiar effect on their individual characters : Mehitabel seemed more human, more normal, less awe-inspiring.

Red Whisker, for example, proudly enunciating, "I see a cat and a rat. Can the cat see the rat ?" was beginning to look at his teacher with such an expression as might fairly have served to illustrate the cat's attitude of mind in this familiar conjunction. Pig-Eye, thoughtfully trying to decide what an imaginary John would do with one apple and four younger brothers, felt instinctively that if he, Pig-Eye, had that apple he would drop any number of younger brothers overboard and give the whole of it to the teacher. A similar softening influence affected all of them ; it was the beginning of the tender passion, although, as such, lack of experience kept any of them from recognizing it.

But Mehitabel, comfortably secure in the belief that she was still a plain, honest-looking girl with a rectan-

gular figure, paid no heed to these uneasy symptoms. She was pleased in a motherly sort of way to note how much more regularly the ten pirates washed their hands and faces ; and it was only when she had succeeded in introducing grammar into the curriculum that the smoke showed fire beneath it. On the very day when she started her ten pupils conjugating the verb " to love " the hidden flames came near to bursting out tumultuously.

Two days afterward there were only nine pirates, and the tenth rocking-chair stood empty. The evening before Yellow Mustaches and Bald Head had gone walking together ; Bald Head, as was reported by Yellow Mustaches, had fallen accidentally overboard ; and just before the accident the two had been heard conjugating the verb in loud, angry voices. Mehitabel accepted the accident sorrowfully, for she had a kindly feeling for the vanished pirate on account of the dresses, and then innocently proceeded with the morning lessons. The nine surviving pirates now conjugated with hardly repressed passion.

" I love, thou lovest, he (or she) loves," they shouted in their harsh, discordant voices, and each out of the corner of his eye glared suspiciously at the others. Mehitabel, realizing that something was wrong, could attribute it only to the possibility that her charges had again been drinking. She closed school for the day, and left them to recover an innocent sobriety.

Between the nine pirates, however, there was now little hope of long delaying the real issue, yet each felt the necessity of concealment. Any way they looked at it, the affair stood one man against eight ; and each in his own simple mind discussed the relations existing between Mehitabel and the others. Red Whisker, it went without saying, was the least popular with her. Nose-

Ring ? Had she not once expressed tender solicitude for the pain he must have suffered when that ornament was inserted ? Bald Head ? But *he*, fortunately, was out of the matter : the shellfish had him. Jonathan the youngest pirate ? But where was Jonathan ?

It is not to be supposed that the pirates reached the vital question at the same moment. They reached it separately, and as they did so each disappeared after another, until nobody remained in the cove in front of the fort but Red Whisker, sitting philosophically on an empty beer keg : owing to Mehitable's successful crusade they were two empty beer kegs together. Having given himself over to sentiment, characteristic of Red Whisker that the presence of the beloved object had no part in his reflections ; he thought rather of a sun-flecked wood in the north, and laughed sarcastically as he remembered the big boy and his indignant attempt at rescue. When he looked up, and, finding himself alone, he cursed himself for a procrastinating pirate, drew his cutlass, and disappeared after the others.

Meantime Jonathan walked with Mehitabel. He had walked often together after school hours, and Jonathan's studious disposition, which had run riot since he had actually been going to school, Mehitabel found a sincere and thoughtful pleasure. He was indeed her prize pupil, having already reached two hundred and two syllables and secretly mastered the multiplication tables as far as the eights ; he had, moreover, a knowledge of farming, such having been his previous occupation, that afforded her much interest and enjoyment. She felt sure that some of his ideas would be valuable to her father. Insensibly, too, for they were nearly the same age, their conversations had passed from educ-

and agriculture to more intimate and lighter topics ; they had told each other much of their past histories, and Mehitabel had listened with a readier interest than she had ever given to similar narratives on the lips of the big boys.

But to-day Jonathan acted queerly as they turned together into a path they had themselves discovered ; a high cliff shaded it on the one side, while on the other it wandered not far from the ocean. He was the only one of the pirates, in the sudden tumult of emotion following the grammar lesson, who had thought nothing whatever about the others and much about Mehitabel. Now, as he walked beside her, he seemed self-conscious and nervous, and suddenly he turned to her desperately.

"Mehitabel," he cried, "I love —" and the poor boy could get no further. He stood tongue-tied, looking down at his own feet.

"Thou lovest," prompted Mehitabel.

"He (or she) loves," continued Jonathan in blushing confusion. "We love. You love. They love."

"That's right," said Mehitabel. And then silence fell between them, broken only by the idle sound of the sea, its little waves kissing the shore of the island. Presently they found a sheltered nook where the deep water flowed in under overhanging shrubbery, and there they sat down together, the young woman on a fallen log projecting over the water, the youth leaning against a tree at a higher elevation. The water lay deep and gently agitated at their very feet, and Jonathan, in his pirate trappings, looked picturesque and even handsome. Mehitabel, as she looked up at him, found herself wondering if Romeo hadn't presented somewhat the same appearance ; nor did it occur to her that Romeo was an Italian and probably had no freckles. Her right

hand, in what was certainly a tempting and coquettish fashion, lay on the log toward Jonathan.

Jonathan saw it, and the temptation affected him. "Mehitabel," he cried again, "I have to say it, I can't help saying it. I love — you." And he reached down and grasped her hand timidly.

Mehitabel frowned.

"Thou, Jonathan," she corrected, "I love. Thou lovest. He or she —" And then she looked up to see Red Whisker peering at them through the thicket. He on his part, was not looking at Mehitabel; he was looking at Jonathan, examining his broad back carefully with the cold eye of a connoisseur, as if to locate a particularly vital spot; and in his hand, drawn back to strike, was his glittering cutlas. Even as she gazed the cutlas moved outward like the tongue of a serpent.

But Mehitabel was quicker. Her hand closed over Jonathan's and she gave a quick, excited swing and pull all in one movement. She was a strong girl, the bank was steep, and Jonathan followed with his mouth still open. What he meant to say was unfinished. There was a big, rotary splash as he struck the water: and hardly had his heels vanished when Red Whisker, losing his balance with the vigor of his unresisted thrust, shot unreservedly after him. He followed so quickly that they both disappeared under the water.

Jonathan was out first. He scrambled back on the bank sturdily, visibly annoyed at having been interrupted, but seeing a head rising from the water he took in the situation and made a movement as if to drag his own cutlas from his soaking waistband. But Mehitabel stopped him.

"Come away from that horrid man, Jonathan," she commanded, and, seizing him again by the hand, she



A TENDER EPISODE WHICH EXPLAINS BUT DOES NOT
JUSTIFY THE EVIL AND DEPLORABLE JEALOUSY OF
THE EIGHT STUDIOUS PIRATES

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dragged him back to the path. They had hardly reached it when another figure became visible, dashing toward them with drawn cutlas ; it was still some distance away, but Mehitabel recognized Nose-Ring and could even see how he grasped that ornament in his teeth to keep it from striking him in the face as he came onward with long savage leaps.

As he leaped forward, Nose-Ring swore terribly ; and an echo seemed to answer him. Mehitabel and Jonathan, looking toward the top of the cliff, saw Yellow Mustaches. He was busily dropping hand over hand from ledge to ledge, and just over the edge above him peered two other faces, distorted with anger and jealousy.

"They've been drinking again," breathed Mehitabel. "Run, Jonathan."

And still holding hands, Mehitabel and Jonathan took to their heels in good earnest ; up hill they went and then down again, and ever nearer sounded the footsteps of their pursuers, uneconomically wasting breath in wicked and unprintable expressions of rage and determination. Eight distinct and different kinds of profanity told Mehitabel and Jonathan that the entire band was behind them. Their hands clung together and their feet kept step with automatic precision (indeed, they seemed to have been made for each other) as they crossed the clearing to the open door of the fort. Then they reached it, and, pushing together, swung the heavy door to even as Yellow Mustaches drove the point of his cutlas into the stout panels. So deep he drove it in that it broke off when he tried to withdraw it, and that made him swear worse than ever.

An angrier lot of pirates than now gathered at the door of the fort it would be difficult for any writer of picturesque fiction to imagine. Often had they boasted among themselves that the fort was impregnable, and now that they found themselves in the position of having to break into it there was not a pirate among them but tacitly admitted that the thing was impossible. Nor under the circumstances did it seem wise to begin kicking each other. One after another dragged pistols from belt and emptied powder and bullets into the closed and unresponsive entrance — but even this was an unwise and foolish exhibition of temper, for (as they immediately remembered) all the rest of their ammunition was inside with Jonathan.

Somewhat calmed, however, by this otherwise silly outburst, the eight pirates withdrew to the beach where they sat down in a moody half-circle. The sand was warm under them and suited well with their own tempers, but they took no comfort in this harmonious setting. From where they sat they could see the top of their chimney just rising above the walls of the fort, and the chimney began presently to smoke violently.

"They're a-makin' of a fire," growled Nose-Ring. "Wastin' good kindlin' as we've took turns a-choppin'. Who'd ever have thought as we who built that fort would ever be a-settin' here outside of it a-wonderin' howsomever we're to get in."

"The next time I builds a fort," remarked Red Whisker bitterly, "there'll be some place in it as nobody but me knows about —"

"Listen at him," exclaimed Pig-Eye contemptuously. "Him build a fort!"

Red Whisker started and laid hand on cutlas. He turned a sparkling eye upon his fellow freebooter.

"Mebbe *you* built that fort," he insinuated politely.

"Mebbe you did, Piggy — but if you had, I guess we wouldn't have any trouble to speak of gettin' into it. Who thought of plantin' the thorny papalapsus all round the wall to keep anybody from gettin' nigh with a ladder? That's the conundrum I'm askin'."

"I thought I did," mildly hazarded another pirate. "But I guess I didn't," he added quickly as Red Whisker turned his eye fiercely toward the interruption. "Come to think of it, Whisker, I remember as how you put it into my head first off. I couldn't have thought of it."

"And it's lucky you couldn't," answered Red Whisker hotly. "As I was sayin', the next time I builds a fort —"

There was a row in the atmosphere, and the other pirates sat up and began to take notice. It made them feel more natural, more like themselves, but Yellow Mustaches brought them back suddenly to a realization of actual conditions.

"Aw, shut up," he said wearily. "Aw, shut up, you fellers. Jonathan dassn't come out and we can't get in. How long's it goin' to last? That's what's eatin' me."

The word "eating" disturbed them all mightily. It aroused unpleasantly attractive memories and took the fight completely out of Red Whisker and Pig-Eye.

"Eatin'," echoed Red Whisker drearily. "Eatin', say ye? I guess that's about all the eatin's likely to be done on this picnic. That — — — — Jonathan's got all the eats."

"An' the guns," grumbled another.

"An' the fishin' tackle."

"An' the First Readers an' Grammars."

"An' — an' the girl, too."

As the last pirate added this item to the inventory there followed a thin grinding noise running from one pirate to another. The eight ground their teeth in unison.

It was a habit, when exasperated, that had given them exceptionally sharp teeth, but at this moment it only emphasized the need of something more nourishing than anger on which to grind them.

Meantime night was approaching. The smoke from the chimney had diminished to occasional puffs and spirals. An appetizing smell of roast goat and onions mingled tranquilly with the piquant odor of the blossoming hedge of thorny papalapsus. Fond as these bad men all were of onions, the memory of their lost domesticity made their eyes and mouths water simultaneously. The hot disk of the sun dropped steadily toward the horizon ; the shadows of their squatting figures stretched farther and farther along the sand, almost to the edge of the forest, now all a-twitter with the good-night chirpings of hundreds of little birds. A wistful melancholy stole over the eight pirates. From the ocean a light, cool breeze stirred their long hair in a vexatiously tickling fashion and chilled them with a premonition of the drop in the temperature that often follows a tropical sunset.

Flesh and blood, in short, could stand it no longer. Red Whisker got up stiffly, tied a dirty handkerchief to the blade of his cutlas and approached the fort. The others watched him without comment.

"M'am ! Teacher !" he called plaintively. "M'am Perkins !" It was the title they had instinctively given Mehitabel when she first came to the island, and he repeated it pathetically several times in succession. From the edge of the forest a sleepy, imitative parrot squawked back : "Teach—er ! M'am Perkins !"

Presently the young woman appeared on the rampart. Her sleeves were rolled up and her hands covered with flour ; she had tied a coat round her waist for an apron,

and she looked prettier than ever, although the discouraged and hungry pirate had now no eye for prettiness. He raised his big fist and twittered his stubby fingers as Mehitabel had taught him was the polite way of attracting her attention.

"We're awful sorry, M'am," he said humbly. "Ain't we goin' to get any dinner?"

"You don't deserve any dinner," replied the young woman severely, "acting the way *you* have. You are a very bad lot of pirates."

"Bad pirates have stomachs just like anybody else, M'am," said the pirate mournfully. "And ours is pious empty."

The childish, ungrammatical sentence touched Mehitabel. She knew that she should never again be able to trust these pirates, but her New England conscience rebelled at the thought of allowing them to go hungry when there was food on her own table.

"Come to the front door one at a time," she said after thinking a moment. "And we'll see what we can do for you," and she disappeared into the fort to consult with Jonathan.

At this welcome assurance Red Whisker could hardly repress a chuckle; hardly restrain the impulse to jump up and crack his heels together for pure satisfaction. Once inside the fort, he told himself, and the situation would take on a very different aspect. He called to the others. As they crowded expectantly round the entrance he softly communicated this hopeful thought to them, and their spirits rose in proportion to their previous depression. Each tickled his neighbor in the ribs, and a mere list of the things they delightedly promised to help each other do to Jonathan could only be printed in the Hades "Daily Recorder"; in the whole wretched

company there wasn't an ounce of gratitude. In this happy frame of mind they were preparing to rush the door when Mehitabel again looked down from the rampart.

"I thought as much," she remarked briefly. "I *said* one at a time."

The eight pirates did their best to seem pleasant and harmless. Each in his own way tried to explain that he was really too hungry to wait — to say nothing of not wishing to keep Mehitabel and Jonathan waiting. But to these polite efforts Mehitabel paid no attention.

"Wretched and ungrateful men," she continued severely, "if you wish any supper at all you will do exactly as I tell you. William" — and here she indicated Red Whisker with a matter-of-fact gesture — "may stay where he is ; but the rest of you will get down the beach as fast as your legs will carry you."

The pirates saw that they must make the best of it. They went down the beach obediently as fast as their legs could carry them and left Red Whisker standing alone outside the portal.

"Far enough !" cried Mehitabel sharply, and the seven stopped at a considerable distance. "As for you, William," she continued, "you get right down flat on your stomach and wriggle in when the door opens. Keep your hands at your sides, right down straight, little fingers at the seams of your pantaloons. You will thus be able to propel yourself by digging your toes into the sand, and don't you dare look up till Jonathan tells you."

Wriggle, indeed ! Nothing but the most pressing need of getting into the fort could have made so bold a pirate accept so undignified a mode of entrance. But Red Whisker had no choice. His seven companions, too far away to hear these directions, stared with surprise at the

peculiar spectacle. The door opened slightly and the ferocious freebooter wriggled indignantly through the narrow opening. Then the door closed behind him and there were several minutes of anxious silence.

"Alonzo J. Murphy!" called Mehitabel, for in calling the roll she had always insisted on giving her pupils the names by which they would have been known had they remained in civilization. Nose-Ring ran forward; like Red Whisker, his companions saw him hesitate, expostulate, and then grovel his way into the fort. One after another, as Mehitabel called the roll, the remaining pirates disappeared into the fort until Yellow Mustaches stood alone on the beach.

"John Smith!" called Mehitabel.

Yellow Mustaches, always dignified, responded with an affectation of leisure. He stood in front of the fort, curled his mustaches and smiled at Mehitabel; but the smile was wasted.

"Now, John," said Mehitabel cheerfully, "you've seen how the others went in. Lie down flat on your face and wriggle. And do hurry, please, for we're all hungry."

Yellow Mustaches's smile faded. He restrained with difficulty a highly picturesque burst of indignation and confined himself to a single sullen monosyllable.

"Shan't," he said sulkily.

"Very well," returned Mehitabel, "if you prefer solitude and personal dignity to companionship and onion soup —"

"I ain't never wriggled for nobody," said the pirate firmly; "and I'll be — excuse me, M'am — and I ain't a goin' to."

Mehitabel leaned over the rampart and looked straight at the sulky pirate. She threw years of professional experience into a single sentence.

"You *are* going to," she said calmly, "so let's not have any nonsense."

And the reluctant pirate, overpowered but unwilling, threw himself on his stomach and began an uneven approach to the door of the fort. Before his very nose the door opened slowly just wide enough to admit him, and he noticed a thin strand of rope stretched across the aperture. Beyond the rope, as he wriggled across it, he saw and recognized Jonathan's boots; then the rope suddenly tightened about him, binding his elbows firmly against his ribs. There was a quick, businesslike tying of hard knots at the small of his back; a rapid, methodical fumbling of fingers about his ankles; a vicious pull upward from behind that brought him clumsily to the perpendicular. He tried savagely to leap forward, but his feet were fastened firmly together with about eight inches of freedom. He tried angrily to grasp his cutlass, but his bound elbows prevented, and Jonathan quietly removed further temptation by taking his weapon away from him. In those days a pirate without his cutlass was, figuratively speaking, a pirate without his liver.

Mehitabel had come down from the rampart. Together she and Jonathan led their captive to the kitchen. When he tried to resist they both took hold of the rope behind and dragged him along backward. Then the neat young woman carefully washed his face at the kitchen sink before taking him in to join his fellow pirates in the dining-room. The unhappy seven sat round the dining-room table, each with his hands tied securely in front of him, and the loose end of the halter in which he had been caught firmly anchoring him to his dining-room chair. Mehitabel and Jonathan unfastened their hands, and they set to eating, but their elbows being still fast to their sides, they were compelled to feed them-



THE HUMILIATING IN-COMING OF HIM OF THE YELLOW
MUSTACHES

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selves with quaint and chicken-like motions. Never did eight ferocious freebooters present a more humorous spectacle, and, as the meal progressed, Jonathan and Mehitabel smiled at each other more than once from the opposite ends of the long table.

When the meal was over they dragged their guests one by one to the front door of the fort and dismissed them for the night. Then they sat a while by the fire talking of their own future, and Mehitabel, after a friendly good night, locked herself in the attic, while Jonathan retired to the parlor sofa, drawn just inside the door of the fort. But neither went to sleep immediately; for Jonathan and Mehitabel were now engaged — Mehitabel had herself suggested it as soon as she found that they were compelled by circumstances to remain together under the same roof-tree — and the gentle tumult in their bosoms long precluded the selfish self-absorption of healthy slumber.

But the eight pirates made a bad night of it. They tried to sing, but that was altogether out of the question, and when they at last slept it was in an uneasy, restless fashion. Morning found them stiff in the joints and weakened in spirit, but they looked grimly determined as they wriggled in to breakfast.

"Now, boys," said Mehitabel when the breakfast was over, "I want to ask you just one question, and you may just as well answer me politely. You know that I don't approve of profanity. How do you like being tied up?"

The pirates exchanged glances.

"We don't like it, M'am," they growled in unison.

"Jonathan and I have been talking it over," continued Mehitabel, "and we thought you didn't. Of course, it doesn't make very much difference to us except for the responsibility of seeing that you don't come undone. We have enough provisions for two years and a half, and

Jonathan has only just begun his education, so we have plenty to occupy ourselves. At the same time has occurred to us that perhaps you would be wise to sail us back to the Cape — ”

The eight again exchanged glances and looked broadly.

“Easy done,” cried Red Whisker. “Just you and these ’ere painters an’ we’ll sail you back to the Cape jist.” He winked at the others, and the seven drew breaths of expectation. Flushes of anticipation ran over their faces and their fingers twitched nervously.

“— without being untied,” finished Mehitabel.

The faces of the eight pirates turned bitter and sullen. They shook their heads. “It can’t be did,” they claimed together. “You don’t trust us, M’am,” cried Red Whisker — and he did his best to say it mournfully.

“You can sail the *Tender Polly* without being tied just as easily as you can eat your dinner.” And Mehitabel rose from the table and folded her napkin. “I don’t think so,” said the pirates. “No, but I do not propose to force you in the matter. It will do no harm for you to think it over. Will you kindly get up and lead the procession from the fore-cabin?”

But Red Whisker settled back in his chair as if he had determined to become a part of it, and the other seven followed his example.

“Shan’t go,” he remarked doggedly. “Ain’t a-going. We’ve sworn it.”

“Here we be, an’ here we stay,” added Nose-bone solemnly. “If you an’ your Jonathan are goin’ to the Cape, you’ll have to haul an’ carry every time. An’ as it goes on,” he added triumphantly, “we’ll be a-gittin’ fatter an’ fatter.”

“Very well,” said Mehitabel. She nodded brightly at Jonathan and went into the next room, whence she

appeared presently carrying her hat as if she had decided to go out for a visit. The pirates watched her with stolid triumph, which turned slowly to apprehension as she removed a hatpin and calmly walked round the table behind Red Whisker. The pirate looked at her over his shoulder, stirring uneasily. Then he stirred more uneasily, and a look of pain passed over his features ; he tried to get up, but his bonds held him to the chair ; although he had so recently expressed a determination to remain seated indefinitely, its cane-seated bottom seemed to have become unpopular with him.

"I thought you might change your mind, William," said Mehitabel cheerily. "Lead William out, Jonathan, and if he doesn't go comfortably, here is another hatpin. Only don't lose it," she added, "because I have only the two of them."

That night Red Whisker was caught trying to get into the fort with loosened bonds, and Mehitabel and Jonathan sent him to bed supperless. This unexpected severity completely cowed his companions, and the next morning found them ready to accept any conditions. That same afternoon the *Tender Polly* set sail for the Cape ; and, more than that, she drove northward with explicit and conscientious directness. The spunk was entirely out of the eight pirates ; far from any longer thinking sentimentally of Mehitabel, they were only anxious to reach the end of their enforced voyage and see the last of her. What was really going to happen to Jonathan, they told each other in bitter, exultant whispers, was far worse and more lingering than anything they could possibly do to him ; and they hobbled about their tasks with almost cheerful alacrity at the thought of bringing him nearer it.

It was late twilight less than a month afterward when

they at last sighted the lights of the Cape, and ten in the evening when Jonathan and Mehitabel floated away from the *Tender Polly*, their last act aboard being to announce to the pirates, whom they had assembled on the quarter-deck for that purpose, that they had hidden a sharp knife somewhere in the cabin. They knew themselves safe from pursuit, even were the knife discovered sooner than they expected, for they had taken the captain's gig and carefully thrown overboard the oars of all the other small boats. The full moon touched the water with spots of silver and the surf against the distant shore made a shining curve, behind which, as Mehitabel knew with a filling heart, lay her road home from the schoolhouse. As the last wave lifted them high on the pebbly beach they both looked back by the same impulse. Lights now moved rapidly on the *Tender Polly*, and they heard the rattling of sails as she came about, faintly mingled with the notes of a rough chorus.

Mehitabel echoed it whimsically :

*“ His wife and little daughter,
They march above the water ;
And in, kerplunk ! they go.
Ho ! boys : ho !
And in, kerplunk ! they go.”*

Then they pulled the gig carefully and economically above high-water mark and hand in hand disappeared in the direction of the Perkins farm.

Little more remains to be told. Joshua S. Perkins, aided by his new son-in-law, did so well with his cranberries that Mehitabel had no further need to apply for her old place at the Four Corners. Jonathan, soon happily married to Mehitabel, became in a short time the

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HE READ HIS READER AND HE PRACTICED HIS WR
LESSONS WITH SLATE AND PENCIL

most learned and tiresome farmer in the whole neighborhood. As for the pirates, they were never again heard of except as Simon would recount their visit and Mehitabel's subsequent adventure to infrequent strangers at the "Maid and Bottle." Mehitabel was always inclined to hope that they continued their studies, but Jonathan doubted it; at any rate, they were able to read their First Readers after a fashion and that was certainly better than nothing.

On the island remained a solitary, bald-headed pirate, rocking day after day in his nice red rocking chair, and wondering what had become of his wicked associates. He read his Reader and he practiced his writing lessons with slate and pencil :

cat

hat

mat

and sometimes sentences, reminiscent and autobiographical ;

" I am a hard one to kill. We had a fine fierce fight by the See, and i fell in the See, and he thought i was dead and went a way with a crew L laugh. But i float like a duck. I came to the sir face and here i am a live and well."

HIS IDOL'S EYE

EYES — *There is light enough, they say, in the East, but eyes are as necessary as light, and therefore Dr. Dodder, who has been successful in setting artificial eyes, has taken passage from New York for Boston, on a professional visit, provided with all the varieties of blue, black, gray, and hazel eyes, which he will set with much skill, and greatly to the satisfaction of patients.* — *Boston Chronicle and Patriot*, March 13, 1830.

THE ocean heaved slowly in long, oily, monotonous blue-green swells. Now it lifted a small boat to the summit of a mountain, from which two solitary voyagers could look anxiously in every direction to a landless and sailless horizon. Again it slid them down, down, down, down, down into a lovely translucent green valley, from which they instinctively raised their eyes heavenward and wondered whether they would ever come up again.

Fortunately it was a fairly warm morning ; and fortunately, too, the occupants of this infinitely lonely little craft were father and daughter. The rigging of a small but portly sail, which, under happier circumstances, could have been no other than the gentleman's frilled shirt, had therefore been accomplished without serious discomfort to one passenger or undue shock to the other. A fair wind, brisk remnant of the historic March gale of 1830, bellied the frilled shirt and held the little vessel due east at about

six or eight knots. Besides her passengers, she carried a keg of water, a hamper of provisions, a plump carpet-bag, and a small, brass-bound chest marked "Dr. D. Dodder" on the ends, and "This Side Up, Handle With Care," on the top.

"I'll have the law on 'em," said the man bitterly. "Yes, sir!" He ground his teeth, drew his black frock coat closer over his hygienic red flannel undergarment, and set his tall hat at an angle better calculated to withstand a wind that kept his long, gray Dundreary whiskers in constant graceful motion. "I'll teach 'em! I'll sue the owners of that accursed vessel for not transporting us according to contract! And the captain for putting us adrift! And the crew for attempted assassination! Here am I, somewhere in mid-ocean at" — he took out his watch, looked at it inquiringly, and hurled it violently and impulsively overboard — "Here am I, somewhere on the broad bosom of the Atlantic — which I wish to Heaven would discontinue these confounded breathing exercises! — with a professional visit announced in all the Boston newspapers and our rooms taken at the Tremont House. And headed for Europe!"

To this acid, but not unnatural, utterance Dorothy Dodder made no immediate answer. She opened the hamper, took out two large round crackers and two small once-dried prunes and laid them in a row on the chest to dry for luncheon. She was a slight, ethereal creature with large blue eyes and a vivacious manner, even in handling a damp dried prune. Her father had often called her his comfort, and she doubtless felt that now if ever was the time to be comforting.

"Isn't it beautiful," she cried enthusiastically, "and doesn't it make you think of the beginning of Byron's lovely poem about the Corsair?"

*“ ‘ O’er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
Survey our empire and behold our home ! ’ ”*

But Dr. Dodder surveyed their empire with disgust and beheld their home with extreme disapproval. Evidently he would have preferred to be at his club.

“ And wouldn’t it be just lovely,” added Dorothy, “ if we were rescued by Conrad and his corsairs ! ”

“ Conrad and his corsairs,” said the doctor testily, “ are dead — and, for my part, I’m very glad of it. We live in the enlightened nineteenth century. Our Eye, so far from being evil, is a positive boon to humanity. In the words of the circular — and you, my dear daughter, are a living proof that I do not exaggerate — one can do everything but see with it. Leaving the chest open was undoubtedly a mistake. But that any connection could be made between our eyes and a storm at sea — ”

“ But I’m sure the poor captain was sorry,” said Dorothy. “ He really had to choose between putting us adrift and being put adrift with us.” Then they fell silent ; and only when luncheon was at last dried and devoured did they again turn their anxious eyes to the distant horizon.

They looked — and danced for joy in their little boat until the shirt jibed and brought them to their senses by almost spilling them overboard. Hardly more than a mile away a small, rakish-looking schooner, heading directly toward their own path and staggering under every possible stitch of canvas, ripped the blue-green swells at a speed, even at that distance, keenly suggestive of some heart-breaking and apprehensive anxiety. They lost her every time they went down into the hollow of a swell ;



THEY DANCED FOR JOY UNTIL THE SHIRT JIBED AND
ALMOST SPILLED THEM OVERBOARD

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they could have wept for joy to find her nearer every time they returned to a summit. They could even see the helmsman's red beard — to which the curling smoke of a hidden pipe lent the curious effect of literally flaming whiskers — and note the curiosity with which five fierce faces peered at them in a row over the bulwarks.

But except for this natural curiosity the strange vessel heartlessly paid no attention to the wild and imploring gestures of the two castaways. She was evidently in a great hurry and not going to stop for anything. The six men waved their hands good-naturedly — and the black schooner crossed the path of the smaller boat with a cruel and mortifying indifference. Dr. Dodder and his daughter saw the high stern directly above them, and their stanch little craft bobbed like a cork in the wake it left behind it.

"Stop!" cried the doctor. "Stop! Stop! Stop! Stop! Stop!"

"Stop!" shrilled Dorothy. "Please stop!"

"Stop — dammit!" shouted her father indignantly. "For the love of humanity! I am Dr. Dodder."

At that name, exactly as if they knew him, the black schooner came about and bore toward them.

"Doctor?" bellowed the man at the wheel. "Did I hear ye say 'doctor'?"

"You did," replied the man in the small boat, raising his tall hat politely. "I am Dr. Dodder."

"Then ye're jest th' feller as we're a-lookin' for," cried the red-whiskered man delightedly.

If the five fierce faces had made Dr. Dodder and his dear daughter somewhat apprehensive at a distance, closer

inspection was hardly more reassuring. Coming over the bulwarks, he saw that each wore the uniform (either too large or too small for him) of a British naval officer — yet, little as he knew about the British navy, Dr. Dodder was aware that admirals did not steer their own vessels, nor a post-captain in that splendid service wear a brass ring in his nose. There were really seven of them, for a tall, graceful fellow near the galley, his brass-buttoned waistcoat protected by a blue gingham apron, industriously beat something, presumably one or more luckless eggs, in a large tin wash-basin. Doubtless his long, handsome yellow mustaches had interfered with this cruel employment, for he had tied the ends together above his head with a piece of tarred rope.

Dorothy Dodder followed her father. Her two bright eyes rose over the bulwarks and met the suddenly enraptured gaze of the man with the wash-basin. Still with his eyes on hers, he set down the wash-basin, tore off his disfiguring apron, and approached rapidly, untying his yellow mustaches with one hand, while with the other he gallantly waved the egg-beater. Quick as he was, however, twelve willing hands had assisted Dorothy to the deck ; and the best he could do was to dive into the cabin and come up with a nice red rocking-chair. He placed the chair in the shadow of the sail, motioned her to it with a graceful wave of the egg-beater, and the others, who had not thought of this happy attention, regarded him with mingled contempt and admiration.

The admiral picked up the doctor's carpet-bag.

"Now as we're all aboard an' cozy-like," he said cheerily, "th' sooner ye see th' patient, doctor, th' sooner ye'll be able to begin a-treatin' of him."

"An' why they calls 'em patients," said the post-captain with the nose ring, "beats *me* ! Listen at pore

ole Bald Head now, messmates, an' tell me ef that sounds like wot ye'd rightly call patient ? ”

Really there was no need of listening. From the cabin issued a continuous, lively, whistling noise, followed an instant later by the crash of crockery against woodwork and the sudden appearance, like a jack-in-the-box, of a round, indignant face in the cabin hatchway.

“ 'E won't tike 'is bloomin' gruel,” exclaimed the face anxiously, peering at them through a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles whose ends disappeared earward over a pair of neat black side-whiskers. “ H'I tries to pour h'it down 'im with th' bloomin' funnel, an' 'e grabs th' dish an' tries to murder of me with h'it. Wot 'e's a-tryin' to say, h'I don't make h'out, an', wot's more, h'I don't want to. H'I'm as tough a man as most, messmates, but there's some things h'as h'I don't like to 'ear spoken.”

“ Wot th' pore feller's a-whistlin' for,” said the admiral, “ be a doctor — an' here's this Doc Dudder — ”

“ Dodder,” interrupted the doctor. “ D-O-D, Dod, D-E-R, der — Dodder. My dear daughter, Miss Dorothy Dodder ” — he made a gesture of introduction, and his dear daughter, sitting in the nice red rocking-chair and conversing gratefully with the gallant fellow who had thought to get it for her, bowed so absently that the others immediately turned their backs on her. “ But I fear, admiral, that you are laboring under a misapprehension — ”

“ Dudder'll do,” said the admiral, and turned toward the cabin. “ Th' pint is as ye cures th' patient or we drops ye overboard.” One after another, his fierce companions glanced toward the rocking-chair. But Dorothy and Yellow Mustaches were too busy with each other to be interrupted — and there was nothing for it but to put their hands in their pockets, shuffle their feet, and whistle

their indifference to women as they followed the admiral.

Sunlight mildly illuminated the cabin. The doctor made out a swinging table, a few more nice red rocking-chairs, a cupboard in the far corner, and a double row of berths along the sides. From one of these berths the doleful whistling noise continued with undiminished ferocity ; as the doctor drew nearer, he saw that it was occupied by a stout, powerful man whose dishonest face had expanded until his lips were pursed in a perpetual pout, and every effort at articulation ended in a prolonged whistle. What his normal appearance might be the doctor could not determine. His nose, always small and knobby, had almost disappeared between two fat cheeks that seemed romantically determined to kiss each other across the bridge of it ; and the baldness of his yellow head, if it had only been provided with a curly stem, would have given him a pitiable resemblance to a pear with the toothache. Even Dr. Dodder, remembering a youthful experience, recognized that the poor fellow was suffering with the mumps.

"Here's th' doctor," said the admiral in that tone of mingled pride and relief with which the person who has run for the physician always introduces him into the bosom of an afflicted family. "Picked him right up off th' Atlantic, Bald Head, 's if Almighty Providence put him there jest to save carryin' of ye in to New York. How do ye feel now, ole feller ?" And as the patient still kept on whistling, Red Whisker got a sheet of paper and a pencil from the cupboard and handed them to him.

The sick man scribbled painfully and industriously. He was evidently one of those whose best composition is accomplished only when they are able to form their words with their lips before committing them to paper. Strange

expressions passed in succession over his swollen but still indomitable countenance — expressions so weird, unimaginable, and yet reminiscently childish that even the admiral could not restrain a giggle. But the invalid looked up from his writing, and his eyes glared so venomously over his fat cheeks that the observers promptly restrained their emotions and gazed thoughtfully at the ceiling.

"Dam bad," he wrote, "I can not curse and dam as I would, but I say dam and dam and dam and dam, etc. I am sick her and sick her. And I am mad too. Who would not be? What do you think of a nurse who feeds you oat meal grew ell through a fun ell when you have had all you want to eat and will not stop? Who wants his dam grew ell in his eye and down his neck? I wish I had broke his head as well as the bowl. You who are well and up may think I am fun he but I am not. When I am dead and all bones you will be sad. You will not gig ell then. I feel all face and no mouth and no eyes or nose to speak of. O! dam! O! hay ds!"

"That's th' way th' pore feller feels, doc," said the admiral sympathetically. "An' now th' conundrum I'm a-skin' is wot ye'll do to make him look an' act an' speak like a self-respectin' pirut?"

The word was out, but Dr. David Dodder was hardly surprised at it. The appearance of these men, their lack of discipline, the uniforms that could only have been obtained by horrid massacre of their original wearers, had all prepared him to realize that he had fallen into the clutches of a profession that had almost become obsolete. Twice in twenty-four hours had he disgustingly penetrated into those corners of the enlightened nineteenth century that were still unilluminated — he had, in short, been put adrift by one anachronism only to be picked up by another. Any way he looked at it the situation precluded the idea of ex-

plaining that, although provided with all the varieties of blue, black, gray, and hazel eyes, and able to set them with much skill and to the satisfaction of patients, his medical title was purely decorative when it came to doing anything else. And Dorothy, Dorothy, his dear daughter, who had so romantically imagined that it would be lovely to be rescued by Conrad and his corsairs ! Even as he thought of her, her dear familiar laugh rippled down from the deck and her father had no difficulty in knowing what was happening to Yellow Mustaches. But did she realize with whom, with *what*, she was innocently indulging her natural feminine delight in provoking admiration ? And if she did realize it — ?

“Stick out your tongue, Dorothy,” said the doctor in a tone of authority.

The patient, although evidently surprised, made a desperate effort. His eyes disappeared ; his whole body shuddered ; brave and sick as he was, he would obey the doctor, though obedience killed him.

“Looks jest like a baby a-blowin’ bubbles, bless him !” murmured the man with the nose ring wonderingly.

“The tip is sufficient,” said the doctor gravely. “A severe case of epluribusunum complicated with veritas. We shall need drugs. The sooner we can get ashore, admiral, to a drug store — ”

“We’ve got th’ drug store,” returned the pirate with a delighted air of conviction. “A hull chest on ’em, doctor, an’ th’ best goin’, cos they was put up for a British war vessel. Wot we needed were th’ able man as could spot th’ pore feller’s ailment an’ pick out th’ kind o’ medicine as goes with it.”

In the hold of the *Tender Polly* eight hammocks — two empty and six full of pirates — swung in unison with the motion of that seaworthy but abominable vessel. The air was chilly, and the six occupants of the hammocks had wound themselves up in their blankets until they had much the look of a small collection of warped and wicked mummies : but four evil heads projected sociably, and in the dim light of the swinging lantern four evil cigars glowed and faded like enormous fireflies. It was the second night after the arrival of Dr. Dodder and his dear daughter on the afflicted vessel, and the third that the crew had swung their hammocks in the hold, for the restlessness of the patient had already made sleep impossible in the cabin. The Dodders, with the help of a modest curtain, now shared that cozy apartment with the ailing pirate.

"Wot I don't like about it," said one of the warped and wicked mummies, blowing smoke sleepily through his bushy red whiskers, "be th' way th' feemale gal is a-carryin' on with Yaller Mustaches. It's onmaidenly."

"Like a annerconder," agreed another, and swung drowsily at an angle that made the lantern light play prettily on his proud brass nose ring. "Like a she annerconder a-charmin' of a pore leetle he bunny rabbit."

"An' wot beats me," said a third, doubtfully wagging his neat black side-whiskers, "is wot she sees in 'im or wot 'e sees in 'er."

"Eet ees zee passion of loaf," declared a fourth dreamily. "I know-a zat Loaf ! Oh, yess !"

The two remaining mummies said nothing, doubtless because they were already sound asleep.

"An' jest listen at him now," added Red Whisker. "Cuss me, messmates, ef th' silly creetur ain't a-serenadin' of her !"

Even with the hatch closed the voice of a vocalizer reached

them, and well they knew it could be no other than their handsome companion. One might have imagined (to adopt a modern figure) that his love reposed in the top of a skyscraper and that Yellow Mustaches was wistfully addressing her from the subway. Loving to sing as he did, his vile but human comrades often wondered where he got the words of his ditties.

"Th' man in th' moon's a-looking down,"

he now sang with his usual fine courage —

" All o' th' world is Slumber Town.

Like as if in a hammock she were

While I rocks it an' sings to her.

Sweeeet — lee sleecep ! Sweeeet — lee sleecep !

While th' hours o' darkness creecep.

An' only pluck from th' Dream-Apple tree

One leetle dream — a dream o' me.

Sweeeeeeeeeeeet — leeeeee sleeeeecep ! "

" Funny thing, too," muttered Nose Ring languidly.
" Askin' of a feemale gal to go to sleep while he's a-singin' to her ! "

" Over her lattice th' roses bloom,"

continued Yellow Mustaches descriptively —

" Scent o' th' jasmine fills th' room.

Coopids are slidin' th' moonbeams thin,

Just to peek where she sleeps within.

Sweeeet — lee sleecep ! Sweeeet — lee sleecep !

While th' hours o' darkness — "

Unlike most serenaders, Yellow Mustaches sat on the roof of his lady's castle — had she peered through the port-hole Dorothy Dodder would have seen his affectionate



UNLIKE MOST SERENADERS YELLOW MUSTACHES SAT
ON THE ROOF OF HIS LADY'S CASTLE

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heels dangling outside her casement — and never before, which is saying a good deal, had he sung so long without stopping. Doubtless he repeated himself, for the handsome fellow's knowledge that he was at last unquestionably in love spurred him to unwonted exertions. Often as he had been in love before, he had never felt the same symptoms as during the past twenty-four hours — a general sense of illness, a slight stiffness of the neck, and a sharp pain in his ears that he could explain only by the phrase "sick of love," which he had once heard and always vividly remembered. Combined with more familiar emotions awakened by Dorothy, these symptoms proved his condition ; and even as he sang he thought of matrimony (which was another new symptom) and rubbed his ear gently.

But Dorothy was already in healthy slumber before he started — and when Dorothy Dodder went to sleep that was the end of her. Before Yellow Mustaches had reached the seventeenth verse, sleep ruled the hold. Everybody (for the pirates were used to him) sweetly, sweetly slept except the singer, the man at the wheel, and Dr. Dodder. And the more Dr. Dodder tried to sleep the less he was able. Even without an infatuated pirate on top of his cabin, Dr. Dodder had enough to keep him wakeful — his daughter, his chest, and his convalescent patient. He knew Dorothy well enough to realize that if she made up her mind to become a pirate's bride — and it now seemed to him as if she was tending in that unconventional direction — nothing could prevent her except violent action on the part of the chosen pirate. The chest worried him because he had observed an almost wolfish curiosity about it on the part of his hosts and knew by recent experience the effect of its contents, blue, black, gray, and hazel, on other ignorant and superstitious sea-

men. Bald Head worried him because he was getting well, for the medicine chest, although none of these brave but illiterate men had been able to use it, contained a book in which the treatment of all known diseases, with mumps under M, was arranged alphabetically — and once his patient was cured, the observant and well-read doctor knew that the best he could hope for was a choice between becoming a live pirate or a dead physician.

*"Slowly th' night hours pass away
While love is voicin' his roundelay,"*

shouted the tender-heart on the roof of the cabin,

*"Still is th' world from all alarms
While I'm a-singin' my true love's charms.
Sweetest — lee sleeeep ! Sweetest — lee sleeeep !"*

Dr. Dodder got up and stood struggling with an indignant temptation. Should he creep on deck, he asked himself ; approach the unsuspecting musician from behind, and, with a sudden, precipitate, determined rush, one hand on collar and the other where breeches afford the surest handhold, shove him rapidly across the deck and over the bulwarks ? In his mind's eye the doctor saw his victim sinking, sinking to depths from which no sound would ever be able to reach the surface, for it somehow seemed to him that, even if drowned, this thing on deck would still keep on going. The temptation was great, but the doctor resisted it. There was his own future to consider, his obvious duty to live as long as possible and carry the boon of the Eye to all who needed it. The Eye ! Ah ! if he could only do something to separate these foolish lovers —

Dr. Dodder hesitated no longer. He tiptoed to Dorothy's curtain and parted it cautiously. In the dim light

the girl slept peacefully, and beside her berth, neatly secured against capsizing by her own dainty shoes, stood a tumbler half full of water. The water mimicked the motion of the great sea outside, and something solid tumbled back and forth at the bottom.

"Over her slumber calm an' still,"

yelled Yellow Mustaches with unmistakable determination,

"I allus watch — an' I allus will.

Soothin' her soul with slumbering song,

Helpin' her dreams o' me along.

Sweeet — lee sleecep ! Sweeet — lee sleecep !"

With a muttered curse, the treacherous father stooped over the tumbler, plunged his thumb and forefinger into the miniature ocean, and grappled the rolling object. Then he retreated with a quick, sly step and stood regarding what he had captured — one of those clear, translucent, tender blue eyes that had fascinated her sinful admirer.

Yellow Mustaches, as might have been predicted, slept late next morning and awoke with every symptom telling him he was more sick of love than ever. It hurt to bend his head in either direction. Getting up at all seemed rather an effort, until the thought that he would meet Miss Dodder at breakfast, which the pirates now took on deck, spurred him to activity. He sat up in his hammock and began curling his mustaches, but, try as he might, he could not make them hang with their usual perpendicular gracefulness. Ordinarily, looking down past his nose, the brave fellow could see their shimmer, but now, to his surprise and wonder, he saw only the rounded outline of his own

cheeks. *And, as a rule, his cheeks were not rounded!* Despite the sickness of love, the gallant pirate jumped suspiciously out of his hammock and felt anxiously in his trousers pocket for the small mirror which he always kept there. Ah, Yellow Mustaches! love, if love it is, has changed you wonderfully! — for now your wicked cheeks seem stouter than a couple of innocent apples. And as a horrified oath leaped to his lips he found he articulated it with ominous difficulty.

All the happiness Yellow Mustaches had anticipated in meeting Dorothy at breakfast, and there reading in her bright blue eyes the joy she had taken in his serenade, vanished like a bursted bubble. The fact that he seemed to be a boy again was no comfort, for a boy with long yellow mustaches is at best rather a terrifying object. He had seen Dorothy grin, and grinned in sympathy, at the weird face presented to his little world by Bald Head — and as this memory came to him, the sickening thought followed close on its heels that the symptoms of the previous day had not been altogether those of love, but partly of the same mysterious malady that afflicted his messmate. He heard the coarse but happy conversation of his comrades at breakfast, but listened in vain for Dorothy's vivacious accents. She at least, he told himself, had noted his absence. Anxiety explained her silence. Soon she would send her father down to investigate.

At that thought Yellow Mustaches leaped into his trousers. There are, as any expert will tell you, degrees of intensity with which you may have the mumps. At the worst you may lie speechless in your little berth and be fed through a funnel; but the lighter attack, funny as you are to an unprejudiced observer and even funnier to a prejudiced one, still leaves you physical strength to dress

in a hurry and peer cautiously over the edge of a hatch. Breakfast was finished. The entire blood-stained company stood at the after-rail idly watching a distant sail ; and the two Dodders, father and daughter, were doubtless down in the cabin tempting the invalid to eat some breakfast.

Yellow Mustaches took one more look at himself in the pocket mirror. There was no change for the better, but, although his head moved with difficulty, he otherwise felt nearly as well as ever. He was undoubtedly irritable, but that might be due to his situation as easily as to his disease. Creeping on hands and knees to the remains of the breakfast, he hastily filled his pockets with cold baked potato and sea biscuit ; then he crept stealthily to the windward side of the vessel and climbed laboriously to the crow's-nest, a large hogshead fastened to the cross-trees. A moment later and the hogshead concealed him. Here he would stay, decided Yellow Mustaches, until he either died or resumed his normal proportions. Although he soon knew that his companions were anxiously seeking him, piracy had been abandoned until Bald Head's recovery, and he felt reasonably certain that none would think to go aloft and look for him in the hogshead.

Clumsy night had again fallen over the Atlantic Ocean when Yellow Mustaches trusted himself to peer cautiously over the edge of his saving hogshead. Except for the man at the wheel, the deck was empty. A light shone from the hold and another from the cabin. And now that the smoke could not betray him, he lit his pipe and again examined his distressing situation.

What amazed Yellow Mustaches was that he was as well as he was. Judging by the pocket mirror, he ought to feel very much worse. He felt, in fact, almost himself, except that there was too much of him, and the

thoughtful fellow could not help wondering where the surplus came from. But this was beside the question : the thing now was to get rid of it. Common sense told him, if only because he could smoke his pipe and feed himself with mashed potato and powdered sea biscuit, that his case was much milder than Bald Head's. If he could only get down into the cabin and capture his messmate's medicine, he could bring it back to the hogshead and treat himself.

Sleep ruled the hold. The time had come for the invalid to take determined action. He left the hogshead, slid to the deck, and stealthily approached the cabin. The hatch he knew was unlocked — for Red Whisker had kept the key to it — but before entering that abode of pain, science, and female beauty, the courageous invalid examined it carefully through the deck windows. Only last night he had seen the doctor administering his drugs to the patient ; in the dim light of the swinging lantern the tumbler, half full of the horrid but wholesome stuff, still stood in the cupboard. Doctor and patient slept soundly on opposite sides of the cabin ; nor was there any sign of wakefulness behind the curtain that (to the wicked but imaginative fellow's regret) concealed Dorothy. The chest, of which he could see one corner, stood almost under the ladder.

Holding his breath, Yellow Mustaches tiptoed past Bald Head. His hand was almost on the tumbler when a rustle behind Dorothy's curtain turned him into a veritable statue, which, had an artist conceived it, might have been catalogued "No. 1323 — Mumps Reaching after Medicine." The curtain parted, and the pirate, after one quick, hopeless glance toward the hatchway, leaped into the nearest berth. Although the dim light obscured her features, his heart told him that the slim figure was Dorothy's,

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"IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW," SAID THE VOICE; "HE'S ASLEEP
AGIN."

dressed all in white (like an angel in a chromo, thought Yellow Mustaches), and her brown hair, unlike an angel anywhere, in a neat pig-tail. Perhaps she walked in her sleep — but if so, the mysterious power that controlled her knew just what it was after. For she stepped straight to her father's trousers, fished a key from the pocket, and a moment later was kneeling beside the brass-bound chest.

Never before had the wild heart of Yellow Mustaches struggled, like a wild stomach, to digest so many emotions. His love for Dorothy contended with his curiosity about the chest; the affinity between them made him share keenly in her evident dread lest Bald Head or Dr. Dodder should awake before she got the chest open. The key turned in the lock, the lid lifted, and, to the apprehensive gaze of the tender pirate, it seemed as if Dr. Dodder turned over six times in quick succession.

"H-s-s-s-t!" he whispered excitedly, "he's a-wakin' up!"

At that sound Dorothy jerked her little hand out of the chest. Instinctively she put down the lid and sat on it. Silence, except for the lapping water against the sides of the vessel, enveloped the cabin, broken, after what seemed an endless interval, by that rumbling, indescribable noise by which our strange humanity announces that it is asleep.

"It's all right now," said the voice in its hoarse and painful whisper. "He's asleep agin."

Dorothy Dodder jumped off the chest, and something that she had snatched from it fell from her little hand and rolled away unnoticed. The first remark, in her nervous condition, might easily have been the accusing voice of conscience — but not the second. Her distress was so evident that it frightened her lover.

"It's me," he added assuringly: "it's jest yer ole friend, Yaller Mustaches."

Just Yellow Mustaches! — there was an empty berth beside her, and she popped modestly into it.

Slowly the night hours passed away, but at last the sun gradually flooded the cabin. Bald Head awoke and yawned deliciously. Health had returned to him. Yesterday the doctor had managed to keep him in bed against his inclination, but to-day he would be up and doing despite forty doctors. Yet for the moment it was nice to lie still and realize that he was bad as ever. Now he heard a deep bass rumble that he recognized as the grand opera of the doctor's sleep, and with it, like the murmur of wood winds in some fairy orchestra, a sweeter note that he attributed to Dorothy. But a third sound, something between a snort and the shrill, lively tune of a peanut roaster, puzzled him for several minutes.

"Sounds for all th' world like ole Yaller Mustaches," muttered the convalescent. "Mebbe he's been a-scrennadin' agin an' dropped off asleep on top th' cabin. Guess I'll go on deck an' wake th' cussed trueba-doer up." Chuckling over this amusing notion, he sat up in bed and looked on the floor for his customary garments. But he stopped in midchuckle — and the grin froze so suddenly on his cruel face that it remained there, a horrid grin lacking either mirth or even intelligence.

On the floor some feet away from his berth a solitary eye gazed thoughtfully up at him with a strange, detached, and yet horribly human interest. Often in his life the wretched fellow had gazed into a human eye, sometimes tenderly, sometimes in anger, sometimes curiously to determine whether the owner was lying, sometimes with a painful earnestness to prove that he was not lying him-

self — but never before had he gazed into a human eye without a human being attached to it ! The eye watched him with a terribly calm and intelligent curiosity ; and Bald Head, the Pirate, returned its gaze with the insane intensity of complete helplessness. Twice he opened his mouth to call the doctor ; twice he closed it under the perfectly absurd feeling that the eye would hear him. One saving fact alone slowly forced itself upon his shuddering intelligence : this eye had no feet, and unless its baleful gaze had already petrified him he might still escape by running away from it. Making a brave effort, he carefully lifted first one foot and then the other, and, although the eye followed these movements with a cold kind of amusement, he found that his legs still worked after a fashion. They shook, but they worked. Heartened by the discovery, he got up slowly, gained the companion-way, and scrambled up the ladder.

Red Whisker had the helm. Smoke rose pleasantly from the galley. About a gunshot to windward a stout three-master held the same course as the *Polly*, and, under other circumstances, the fleeing pirate would have recognized her as a whaler just starting on a three years' voyage to the Antarctic. But he had no mind for sea scenes. Still glancing over his shoulder, to make sure that the eye, feet or no feet, was not pursuing him, the recovered invalid rushed to his captain.

"Why, Bald Head, ole feller !" cried Red Whisker delightedly — but his delight vanished in anxiety at the other's haggard expression.

"Come with me, Red Whisker," he whispered hoarsely ; "come with me an' see ef ye see it yerself." Side by side the two brave men peered down into the cabin — and then, side by side, and as fast as their trembling legs could carry them, they fled together to the waist of the vessel.

"H-h-has it been there long?" articulated Red Whisker.

"Ever s-s-sense I woke up."

"Then wot we've got to do, messmate," said Red Whisker grimly, "be to g-g-get that doctor an' his darter off this ship as quick as may be — an' we got to do it polite-like. He's good-natured now, but —"

Ten minutes later a gun boomed on the *Polly*. Her mast signaled distress. The whaler heard it and came up into the wind, but no more promptly than Dr. Dodder came up out of the cabin. Almost he ran into Red Whisker and his late patient; and, to the doctor's amazement, they both asked his pardon.

"Doctor," said Red Whisker, "here be Bald Head up an' 'round agin. We're a black-souled lot, sir, but we've got hearts in our busums. An' we onderstands, doctor, as how a fine, honest feller like yerself can't abear th' company on us —"

"Your company is — er — delightful," said the doctor hastily. "Strong, nature-loving men, sailing the deep blue ocean —"

"We're a bad lot," insisted the pirate, "an' we can't help seein' as we ain't th' proper company fer you an' yer darter. We like ye great, but th' world needs ye. Th' world can't git along without ye, doctor, an' there's th' truth on't."

"I hates to see it, but there's a stout Boston-bound ship a-waitin' for ye. We've bailed yer leetle boat, tho' I ain't a-sayin' as we didn't drop a tear or two a-doin' of it —"

Well has it been said, the Devil is not as black as he is painted. The doctor's eyes misted. He held out a hand to each of them.

"I — I'll call my daughter," he said brokenly. "I've done you all an injustice, admiral — you're a noble lot —"

Meantime the gun's dull roar hurried Miss Dodder, dressing behind the curtain whither she had fled when dawn revealed no lover peeking into the cabin, and it awoke the lover who was there already and not peeking only because he was sound asleep. One thing he instantly remembered : he had not yet taken his medicine, and the slow, horrid, wholesome business engrossed him so completely that Dorothy Dodder came unnoticed from behind her curtain, her head bent forward, her whole attention on the floor of the cabin. The eye still sat on the floor and stared meditatively at nothing in particular ; Dorothy saw and picked it up with a happy little cry of recognition. And the pirate heard her. He turned his head, slowly because of his mumps, and found her looking directly at him. Never before had Yellow Mustaches seen his idol so angry ; never before had he seen her, or any one else, so bewilderingly beautiful. Blue eyes make some girls beautiful. Brown eyes make others. Dorothy beat them all and stared at him with one blue eye and one brown one. Some men would have loved and desired her more than ever, but in the pirate's foolishly conventional mind this perplexing beauty turned his dream of love into a hideous nightmare.

"Who are you, sir ?" demanded Dorothy briskly — and then, as the truth burst upon her : "Why ! You've — got — the — mumps," she giggled hysterically ; "you must go right to bed and papa will take care of you." Had it been almost anything else, she would have said : "And I will take care of you" — but romance, at least that one, died at the very sight of him. She wondered why he shrank away from her, but, as he collapsed conveniently into the berth, she covered him up with the blanket and platonically tucked in the edges.

"Dorothy," called her father, "get your hat, Dorothy.

A Boston vessel is waiting for us, and two of these n fellows are coming down for the chest."

Ten minutes earlier he might have had to use his thority, but now she followed obediently into their l boat and only wondered why the grateful corsairs see so unwilling to look at her. The frilled shirt was g (Red Whisker, in fact, was wearing it), but her father t the oars and pulled clumsily toward the whaler. Bel them sail on sail bellied above the schooner. Over after-rail a row of seven fierce faces watched them tently. But when Dorothy turned to wave her poc handkerchief the rail was empty. Seven fierce faces dodged behind it, and, across the dancing water, *Tender Polly* fled toward the far horizon.

DELILAH

THE frost was out of the ground. The long winter of 1827 was at last well over. A young moon silvered the pretty little New England beach now known to all readers of summer resort advertising by a pretty little Indian name that no real Indian could possibly hope to recognize. But there were then neither hotels, nor cottages, nor even a bungalow — nothing but the dark, encircling woods, the idly rippling water, and a solitary pirate, sitting on the edge of a boat and smoking a solitary pipe of tobacco. Now and then he curled his long yellow mustaches with a small pocket comb, cast an eye seaward where a smart, rakish-looking schooner lay comfortably at anchor, or pushed the boat off a little to keep pace with the falling tide. But, for the most part, he looked nowhere in particular and seemed rather bored than otherwise by his lonely situation — so much so that he presently took out his cutlas and began writing words with the point of it in the wet sand: "Pig," "dog," "cat," and finally a whole sentence: "It makes a man sick to stay here and watch the boat while his friends are all a way on a good time." And then he added, as if by inspiration: "I think I will go a board and let them swim out, curse them." Pirates, in fact, were often fellows of the most rudimentary book learning, and the mere ability to form these simple sentences seemed to afford the handsome rascal a lively satisfaction. But he had hardly finished when he cocked

his head and listened intently. Somewhere in the dark woods a half-dozen or more harsh voices raised a rude and melancholy ditty :

*" We buries it at midnight,
A grim an' horrid band.
To mark th' place,
With sollum face,
We paces off the strand.
Mebbe a skull with hairless brow
A-starin' downward from a bough,
Or else an ampytated pair
O' hands pint bony fingers where
Th' buried treasure be.
An' then we makes a cryptygram
In case some day we might say : ' Damn !
Where can that treasure be ? '*

*" We buries it by moonlight
Onder a riven tree.
Th' lightnin' hit
An' rivened it :
It's gallus-like to see !
Mebbe a carrion crow or two
Looks down an' wonders wot we do —
An' oft, from out th' shadder dim,
An owl will screech on withered limb
Where buried treasure be.
An' then we makes a cryptygram
In case some day — "*

Seven men came out the woods, and the young moon silvered the spades and pickaxes that they bore on their shoulders. A man whose face seemed to be all whiskers

led them, beating time to the savage melody with upraised forefinger, and a little fellow with gold earrings and a sensitive but wicked way of lifting his feet brought up the end of the procession. They crossed the beach at a rapid pace, threw their utensils into the boat, and laid their big tanned hands on the gunwales, ready to shove her off into deeper water.

"Whisker," demanded the man with the yellow mustaches sternly, "wot's become o' Piggy?"

The man thus addressed wheeled about anxiously. He turned a startled eye upon one after another of his wicked companions, and found each of them attempting to turn a startled eye on all of the others. Then he took off his hat and scratched his head thoughtfully. It was a red head, now you saw it in the moonlight, and his bushy beard came up so close to it that only the tip of his nose was visible. At this moment it called attention to itself by moving rapidly like the nose of a rabbit, such was the concentration with which the owner was thinking.

"Ef you've a-massacred th' pore feller jest acos ye hadn't anybody else to bury with th' treasure —" began the man with the yellow mustaches indignantly.

"Massacred yer grandmother to bury with treasure!" said the other with equal warmth. "Wot with only nine able-bodied seamen in th' jolly company, Yaller Mustaches, an' with young piruts as scurse as they be nowadays, 'tain't no time to massacre messmates. I ain't sayin'," he added reflectively, "as half th' fun o' buryin' treasure ain't massacerin' of th' pore feller as ye buries with it: an', in th' ole days o' piracy, th' proper thing for a pirut cap'n to do when he went a-buryin' were to massacre everybody else as had a hand in it. But there 'tis! Times is changed, an' ye have to put th' pooty leetle treasure in th' ground without no ghosties to guard.

it whatsomever. Wot's become o' Piggy is a conundrum as beats me, messmates, and there's the truth on't."

The little fellow who had brought up the rear put in his oar vivaciously. He hopped up and down on the yellow sand until his gold earrings twinkled with an uncanny suggestion of godless merriment.

"I have-a eet," he explained excitedly. "I know-a heem — that Piggee ! He iss loafer."

"Loafer yer bloomin' self, Pedro," said another of the brutal but interesting company — and glared sharply at him through a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles whose ends disappeared earward just above a neat little set of mutton-chop whiskers. "H'I knows ole Pig, h'I do, as h'I knows me own stommick. Laof 'e never did. Set in 'is leetle ways is Piggy, but to call 'im a loafer —"

"Wot Pedro means, Mutton Chop," put in a long, small-nosed scoundrel, tapping his cruel front teeth with his large brass nose-ring to attract attention — "Wot Pedro means is lover. I love. You love. He, she, or it loves. Savvy ?"

"You speak-a eet," agreed Pedro. "I loaf. You loaf. Piggee — he loafs."

The red-whiskered man uttered a profound and varied curse.

"Who's th' woman ?" he demanded bitterly, "an' how comes as I've never heard mention o' it ? Every spring reg'lar I has to trounce that kind o' nonsense out o' him, cos th' silly fool gets minded to go ashore an' live honest. Who's th' woman ?" he repeated.

Brave as they all were by nature, and inured to danger as a matter of business, none of the seven wished to answer him. Well they knew what moved him ; for in 1827 piracy was no longer the well-filled profession of the preceding centuries, and the loss of a single member of their

little company would be a serious blow to their chosen occupation.

"The widow Egge," they chorused together in their rough, discordant voices.

"She as keeps th' tavern ten miles to nor'ard ?" asked the captain grimly.

None ventured to say it ; but they all nodded, and gave the boat a mournful push seaward, for the tide had dropped several inches.

"Come with me, Yaller Mustaches," said Red Whisker briefly. "The ground's soft an' we'll be able to trail him. As for th' rest o' ye," he added, "get ye aboard th' *Polly* an' lay to 'til ye sees us a-signalin'." He picked up the painter of the boat, drew his cutlas, and severed some three or four yards of hemp, which he coiled grimly over his sturdy forearm. "We'll save him yet, Yaller Mustaches," he declared hopefully — and a moment later the two brave figures had crossed the beach and plunged into the forest. The beach lay empty, for the six remaining pirates were pulling stout oars toward the waiting schooner.

For perhaps five minutes the two pirates advanced rapidly, Red Whisker leading and Yellow Mustaches close on his heels. The brush crackled under their feet, the moon peered down anxiously at them through the budding branches ; but suddenly the leader paused, finger on lip, and listened intently. They had just crossed a knoll and stood on the edge of a little valley. Somewhere below them they heard the sound of spade-work and a harsh but lonely voice caroling cheerfully :

*"Mebbe a skull with hairless brow
A-starin' downward from a bough,
Or else an ampytated pair
O' hands pint bony fingers where —"*

" *He's a-diggin' of it up!* " whispered Yellow Mustaches — and they advanced cautiously until they were at last able to part the lower branches of a thick fir and peer out at the solitary singer.

He was busily at work in the middle of a little clearing, not far from where a dead pine pointed its withered top mournfully skyward. Lightning had not riven it, but it was evidently the best pine they could find under the circumstances. Its dead branches bore appropriate fruit, for, about as high up as a man could clamber without becoming a dangerous risk for a modern accident insurance company, a grim white skull peered down at the digger with a grotesque kind of inhuman curiosity. He had already excavated a considerable hole, piling the treasure methodically beside it as he worked — a miscellaneous heap of candlesticks, old boots and shoes, crockery, hats, marine instruments, bottles, umbrellas, and such other articles as a pirate might be expected to capture from the average vessel. For treasure is treasure ; and if the only use you have for it is to bury it under romantic conditions, it really makes very little difference what kind of treasure you have to bury — a simple and human side of piracy which has been generally neglected by piratologists. Now and then he dug out some article of wearing apparel that seemed to appeal to him, for he climbed out of the hole and hung it neatly on the withered pine, where several already selected garments hung suspended as if from a hat-tree.

Presently his stout but active figure disappeared altogether in the excavation. He lifted a little leather trunk to the surface, climbed out of the hole, and sat down on the trunk to rest after his labors.

" Now's th' time, Whisker," whispered Yellow Mustaches, " ef we creeps up behind him easy-like — " And

he was out of his covert, his long graceful figure wriggling like a serpent as he crept toward his victim. He moved on his belly, advancing rapidly with little, hardly perceptible hitches — but the big, strong hand of his respected captain followed him like a flash, caught him firmly by the ankle, and drew him back into his covert with the swift, clean celerity of an archer drawing his bow. Had a large enough bow been present, one might have imagined that Red Whisker was about to transfix Piggy with the arrow-like form of Yellow Mustaches.

“Not yet, ole feller,” he hissed in the astonished ear of his indignant subordinate. “I’ve thought it over, an’ I’ve a leetle plan as is better than tyin’ of him up an’ carryin’ of him back to th’ *Polly*. Leave th’ fool to his folly,” he added bitterly, “— an’ then come an’ fish him out on’t.”

Meantime the tired pirate, quite unconscious that he was being left to his folly, had recovered his animation. He got up smartly, took off his picturesque pirate garb, and threw it carelessly with the rest of the treasure. Then he solemnly turned his attention to the garments that he had selected and hung on the pine. Soon he was arrayed in a pair of plaid pantaloons, a frock coat with brass buttons, and a tall hat, somewhat the worse for having been buried, but still presentable after he had brushed it thoroughly on his coat sleeve. Into the pocket of his coat he dropped a stout leather bag that jingled merrily, and then, placing a compass on the smooth ground, he studied it carefully. Finally he shouldered the little leather trunk and marched away into the forest.

“Straight course for th’ widder Egge’s tavern!” remarked Red Whisker contemptuously. “All dressed up for th’ wooin’, with money in his pocket an’ his trunk on

his shoulder." They reburied the treasure in silence, taking turns with the spade, till the job was finished ; then Red Whisker, still thoughtful but occasionally chuckling harshly, turned toward the forest, and Yellow Mustaches shouldered the spade and followed.

The firs hid them. Soon the early dawn touched the tops of the trees, and an early swallow perched on the dead pine and meditatively regarded the grim fruit that grew on it. Another swallow followed, and they chirped excitedly, seeming to say, one to the other : " What a lovely place for a nest ! "

In the back yard of the widow Egge's tavern a stout ex-pirate chased a hen with an ax. Spring had advanced another three weeks, and now the woodland behind the tavern — which stood conveniently between two thriving seaport communities — was all a-haze with cunning baby leaves and all a-twitter with mating bird calls. Nature was full of tenderness, except the ex-pirate ; and full of happiness, except the hen.

Mrs. Martha Egge, watching the interesting spectacle from her kitchen doorway, responded placidly to this general ecstasy, and shook hands with herself under her blue gingham apron. She was a handsome woman in a neat buxom way that suggested both the sweetness and heartlessness of a large china doll, miraculously come to life and running a tavern. Many guests had made love to her. But this ex-pirate (whom she knew only as an uncommonly thirsty gentleman with an almost amusing facial resemblance to her best pig) was the first admirer who had ever offered to do the chores — and, although she

could get them much better done for a small outlay, she was not the widow to miss so excellent an opportunity of getting them done for nothing. Experience and the widow, having already taught the good-natured fellow how to milk a cow, had this morning undertaken to teach him how to kill a hen. But here the reckless captain had insisted that he knew more than the widow. Accustomed professionally to killing people in a free, offhand way with a cutlas, he had vaingloriously twirled the unfamiliar ax round his finger and approached the hen in the same spirit. But hens are not people. She had seen the ax. The widow, not caring to exercise so soon after breakfast, had withdrawn to the door-step. And Experience, that best of teachers, had the new pupil all to herself with the whole back yard for a schoolroom. They pursued the hen together, Experience pointing out what not to do as soon as the ex-pirate had done it — and such was the expression of murderous ambition that already filled the greedy countenance of the pupil that, had the hen turned and seen it, she would undoubtedly have fainted in her tracks and the cruel deed could have been mercifully accomplished before she recovered consciousness. It was a pretty thing to watch, and the widow hated to leave it ; but the bell rang in the tap-room, and she hurried in through kitchen and parlor with such reluctance that even this careful woman left all the doors open behind her.

The tap-room faced east. The morning sun flooded the sanded floor, sparkled with a gay intoxication of its own on the polished bottles behind the bar, and reached a long, golden finger into the corner where Grandfather (for so she called her tall Colonial timepiece) ticked with an almost reproachful sobriety. But the first object that would have caught the eye of any new arrival — as indeed

it was meant to — was a large placard that the widow had herself worked in fancy worsteds. Its pretty letters expressed an unalterable business policy :

NO PAY — NO STAY
NO CHINK — NO DRINK

And even the dainty border of red, green, and yellow forget-me-nots had not been allowed to obscure the meaning.

A stout, fashionably dressed man stood at the bar and examined the tavern register, moving an incongruously tarry finger from one name to another. He was a depraved but hearty-looking fellow — hardly a gentleman, thought the widow, despite the London cut of his coat and trousers — to whose round face and nondescript little features a deep layer of tan gave something the aspect of an intelligent but untrustworthy potato. Two small blue eyes followed his thick finger and twinkled with satisfaction as it stopped triumphantly on the name "Cap ten Jane Bond," plainly written in a large, childish handwriting. Mrs. Egge had herself studied the name with considerable curiosity, for it belonged to the lively gentleman whom Experience was now teaching how to kill a hen.

"Calls hisself Jane Bond," chuckled the investigator, "cos it's th' only name as he knows how to spell, bless him!" — and he looked up from the book and found Mrs. Martha Egge regarding him with professional hospitality.

One strong hand lifted his beaver even as the other dived into his pocket and lifted a coin. He bowed solemnly to the widow, winked at the placard, set the tall hat jauntily on his bald head, and spun the coin dexterously on the top of the counter.

"Mornin', m'am," he remarked cordially. "Mebbe ye might be persuaded like to mix me a leetle portion o' rum an' water."

Mrs. Egge jumped — for such were the identical words in which Captain Bond frequently ordered the same satisfying beverage. But she managed to transform the motion into a brisk, top-like revolution toward the bottles behind her. Even as she revolved she recalled the new arrival as one of the group of transient customers in which she had first seen the Captain.

The stranger raised his glass, sampled the contents, smacked his lips approvingly : one might almost have said that he was kissing the Demon. "Wot I likes about a mornin' like this," he continued ingratiatingly, "is to walk in th' pooty woods, m'am, an' listen to th' leetle birds a-singin'. Th' he-bird a-serenadin' of th' she-bird, so to speak, afore they makes it up an' calls in th' parson. A marryin' season, m'am ! An' it's been my obsarvation," he added, putting down the glass and pushing it toward her with a gesture that needed no explanation, "as th' happy business is as catchin' as measles."

The widow Egge shrugged her pretty shoulders. She was accustomed to silly conversations over her bar, and counted them all in the day's business. But behind this silly conversation she felt instinctively that something threatened the Captain. And little as she really loved him — or was ever likely to — she had no idea whatever of losing him so long as he continued to pay his daily reckoning and helped to do the chores in addition.

"You don't get the measles but once, sir," she replied prettily. "And as for an old thing like me — and twice married already —"

Bald Head the Pirate, evidently a diplomatic fellow in his own opinion, closed one eye and allowed his wicked soul to look mischievously at the widow out of the other. Then he closed the eye out of which his soul had been looking, opened the other, and the quickness with which the poor lost thing got across and looked out of this new window was a first-rate compliment to the widow's attractions.

"I've heard tell," he said thoughtfully, "as how the children o' Riyal Fam'lies was married in infancy, but I didn't know as it were ever done in this country." And a deep gurgle of rum mingled melodiously with the happy giggle of the surprised and delighted widow. "A duck, m'am, ef I do say it," he continued less delicately, "an' ye've had an ole friend o' mine a-stayin' in th' tavern as I'm bound would agree with me. Cap'n Jane Bond, I see by th' leetle book as he put his pooty name in. Mebbe he's here yet, m'am?"

"No," said the widow promptly. "He *was* here."

"Allus a-makin' love," said the stranger. "Not sayin' much cos he were born bashful afore women — but allus a-sittin' round, as ye might say, an' lettin' of his heart speak for him in shy glances. An' a great feller for rum an' water," he went on more confidently. "A leetle cracked on th' subject — not o' rum an' water, o' course, but feemale women. An' partic'lar bad in th' springtime — pore Cap'n Jane Bond!"

The widow Egge leaned her rounded elbows on the neat bar.

"I think he said something about being a retired sea captain," she said reminiscently, "with a large fortune."

"With a large nerve!" said the other laconically. "Wot I don't onderstand," he went on presently, "is how Cap'n Jane ever got away from this tavern with a feemale woman like you a-runnin' of it — ef ye'll excuse me th' truthful word, m'am. Mebbe he's still lingerin' in th' neighborhood an' jest drops in occasional an' cozy-like" — and as the gallant fellow hopefully waited for the widow's answer, he idly twiddled her plump, pink fingers.

Meantime Experience and the ex-pirate still chased the hen. Together they had followed her rapidly three times around the back yard, twice over the hen-house, once over the fence, four times quicker than ever around a stump on the other side of it, and then once more over the fence and home again. Had the hen been human and the ex-pirate armed with his old familiar cutlas, he would have made short work of her; or had Experience been willing to cut across the back yard and head the hen off, they might have done something together. But this best of teachers never leaves a pupil whom she has under instruction; the ax handicapped the ex-pirate; and now that the three of them had all got their second winds, it began to look as if the session might go on indefinitely.

"The reason you don't catch the hen," said Experience, as side by side with Captain Jane Bond she again clambered up the side of the hen-house, "is because you can't flutter" — which, like many of her teachings, was really almost foolishly obvious. The hen rested. She examined the roof carefully and looked in vain for a worm, while the determined Captain and his wise but invisible companion were mounting laboriously to the same level; and then, with one of those sudden transitions of which only a hen is capable, she shrieked with terror and fluttered excitedly down again. The two leaped after her. A moment later, and one behind another — the hen, the Captain, and the

best of teachers — they fled with exactly equal speed along the side of the tavern.

But now Experience compelled her wicked pupil to listen. "The mistake you are making," she panted, "is to make this poor creature afraid of you."

Captain Jane stopped — and so, almost at the same instant, did the hen. He concealed the ax craftily behind him and sat down on the doorstep, mopping his fevered brow with a red bandanna handkerchief. But he was evidently learning his lesson, for presently he put away the handkerchief and did his best to assume the attitude and expression of one who feeds poultry.

"Chick!" he said briskly in a hoarse voice that he tried to render inviting and even affectionate, but only succeeded in making affected and silly, "Chickchickchickchickchickchick!"

The hen had stopped at a little distance. She scratched up a worm and refreshed herself with the dainty morsel. But despite the complimentary inference that Captain Jane Bond had suddenly fallen in love with her and regarded her as a chicken, she scorned the friendly hand that he now held out to her.

"What she wants is *real* corn," said Experience. Together they went to the barn to get it, and returned just in time to see the hen proudly strolling into the kitchen.

Ordinarily, knowing what he did about Mrs. Martha Egge's opinion of hens in the kitchen, this sight would have horrified the ex-pirate. But now he welcomed it. A kitchen is a small place, with little room to flutter. He forgot his invisible companion, picked up his ax, boldly entered the kitchen and closed the door so promptly that it was as much as ever that the best of teachers managed to squeeze in after him. The hen turned from the stove,

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THE EX-PIRATE SHOT SO RAPIDLY THROUGH THE TAP-
ROOM THAT EXPERIENCE (INVISIBLE BUT DETER-
MINED) HAD HARD WORK TO KEEP UP WITH
HIM

which she had been examining with a natural feminine interest, even as the ex-pirate, with a bitter and involved oath, leaped forward and made a triumphant downward clutch at her.

"The trouble with that hen," said Experience a moment later, "is that she is so much smaller and quicker than you are. Now if you could shoo her into the corner and then approach quickly enough on your hands and knees —" But the disappointed Captain was again unwilling to listen to the calmer observations of his invisible companion. Waving the ax furiously, he clenched his teeth and again started madly in pursuit of the hen. She fled vociferously from the kitchen into the parlor, but, often as she had perhaps wondered in her timid way about that forbidden apartment, she had now no time to stop and examine it. The awful uproar of a hen fleeing for her life preceded her into the tap-room — and the widow's plump fingers tightened convulsively over the stranger's hand and held it firmly : leaning on the bar as he was, it was impossible for him to turn and look behind him. But a mirror hung over the bar and reflected the tap-room. In it he saw the piteous hen dash from the parlor, scurry across the sanded floor, and fly clucking out of the window. In it he also saw Captain Jane Bond, ax in hand, dash from the parlor, scurry across the sanded floor, and clamber hastily — he, too, seemed to be clucking ! — through the same peacefully sunlit opening. Looking neither to right nor left the ex-pirate shot so rapidly through the tap-room that Experience (invisible but determined) had hard work to keep up with him.

Martha Egge released the captive hand.

"The way that boy chases the poultry all over the house !" she exclaimed pettishly. "Yes, the Captain does drop in occasionally" — despite herself she couldn't

help adding it. "But I really never know just when I am likely to see him."

Bald Head the Pirate nodded. He was a man capable of putting one thing with another, and he made no comment on the spectacle which he had just witnessed.

"Mebbe ef I left a leetle note for him," he suggested, "ye'd see that he got it."

Five minutes later Martha Egge watched him out of sight in the distance and balanced a letter thoughtfully on her recently twiddled fingers. Then she struck a match, softened the seal, and spread it open.

"dear pig," it began, in a large, school-boy hand strikingly like the Captain's —

"I take my pen in hand to tell you that the time is up. I am here and I saw you chase the poor hen through the room. All so I have saw this 2 times wed girl that you love. She is a hen too, fair but crew ell. She makes you do chores, and takes your gold, but she does not love you. That is straight. Pig, be a man, not a love sick jack ass and slave to a hen. The ship is in the cove that you know and I come to tell you to join us now. If you are not there soon we will come and get you. Oh ! Cap ten Jane Bond. So no more now from,

your good friend,

"his X mark."

It was a puzzling document any way that Martha Egge looked at it, but one thing was certain : here was no letter for the infatuated Captain. She hid it behind the bottles and turned to smile at him as he appeared in the doorway.

"I've killed th' hen, ma'am," he announced with a weary kind of triumph. "An' wot I needs now is a leetle portion o' rum an' water to kind o' cool me off like." And

with a vindictive glance at the placard above the bar, he dragged a little leather bag from his pocket and reluctantly produced the necessary coin.

Spring had advanced another week, and the only sounds in the cozy tap-room were the click of knitting-needles behind the bar, where Mrs. Egge was leisurely fashioning herself a plump but graceful stocking, and the occasional smacking of chronically thirsty lips as Captain Jane Bond moistened them at regular intervals from the glass of rum and water at his elbow. One familiar note was lacking, and presently the Captain himself noticed it.

"Don't seem nat'ral-like without ole Granther a-tick-in'," he remarked sociably. "A humlike sound to my way o' thinkin', Mrs. Martha Egge."

The widow nodded. Truth to tell, her thoughts were busy with the letter that she had concealed behind the bottles. Although not a "worrier," the more she thought of that letter the less she liked it, for she realized fully that something was going to happen, and to a decisive nature there is nothing more annoying than an indefinite statement.

"He'll be ticking again come this time to-morrow," she said carelessly. "The clock man promised them works back by this afternoon, and that means twenty-four hours afterward. Everything wears out in time, Captain Bond, even a clock's inwards. Shan't I mix you another glass of rum and water?"

Captain Bond hesitated; for of late he had shown a morbid and unnatural tendency to think before he drank. But the widow already had his glass and was busy with the ingredients. He glanced helplessly at the placard over

the bar, unbuttoned his coat, produced a fat leather bag from his inside pocket, and slowly extracted a small silver coin from very near the bottom of it. If the widow feared that something might happen to the Captain before the little bag was empty, the Captain was becoming equally apprehensive that nothing would happen with his wooing unless it happened before the same psychological moment. Experience — who is always with us, although we often little suspect it — was beginning to whisper that it was now or never if he hoped to become a permanent lodger.

"Humlike," repeated the captain presently. "Humlike's a word as I loves to dwell on. Here be I, Mrs. Martha Egge, an' there be you, an' wot I hopes is as we don't have another guest th' hull blessed evenin'."

"Selfish, Captain Bond!" said the widow. "Selfish, selfish!"

"It's now or never, Cap'n," repeated Experience. The Captain heard her. He gulped his entire glass of liquor, wiped his mouth bravely on the back of his sleeve, and squared his shoulders.

"Love's allus selfish," he declared fiercely. "Love's allus selfish, dear Widder Egge; an' wot I likes best in th' world is to set alone with ye, an' time a-slippin' away regardless-like, an' payin' no more attention to us than these 'ere leetle sippets o' rum down my gullet. It's a pooty thought, now ain't it? An' seems if we'd a-knowed each other ever sense we was leetle infants a-cooin' an' a-cussin' in our mother's arms; now don't it?"

To look at Captain Jane Bond nobody would have suspected so poetic an outburst. Even he seemed surprised at it; but it gave him courage. He got up suddenly, put one big hand over his right lung, and extended the other passionately toward the amazed and anxious widow.

"You're so awful quick at getting acquainted, Captain

Bond!" she exclaimed warningly. "The way you go on after a month's acquaintance —"

"Quick I allus were," cried the Captain, "'n' quick I allus will be. An' quicker'n ever when I loves a feemale woman. Not as I ever loved one afore I see you, Widder Egge," he added quickly, "an' that mebbe has made me seem a bit slow a-sayin' of it. But here I've been a hull month a-courtin' of ye, an' ye can't say as it's anything but yer wunnerful modesty an' maiden bashfulness — for all ye're a widder — as keeps me still at it. Now can ye — ?" and with a sudden excess of tenderness the anxious lover leap-frogged over the bar and came down on his knees in front of her. For once in her life, Martha Egge was a speechless widow. She tried to get her hand away from him — but now that Piggy, the ex-pirate, had found it possible to express affection in words, not one widow, nor a dozen, could have stopped the deluge. "An' ye've let me help ye about th' tavern," he continued hopefully, "milkin' th' cussed cow, killin' th' silly hens, doin' a chore here an' a chore there in a humlike way as if th' hull business were done an' settled. Ah! widder, widder — I couldn't a-done more work around th' place ef we *had* been married. An' now as we've got so well used to each other, wot's th' matter o' makin' a settled thing on't afore folks gets to talkin' about us? All ye have to do, ma'am, is to shut yer pooty eyes an' say th' dear leetle word, ma'am, when th' parson axes of ye — an' it's all done an' over with quicker'n havin' a tooth pulled. Love's a gentle tyrunt —"

Somewhere, and very near the tavern, an owl screeched wildly and another owl answered. Love might well be a tyrant, but the wild and unexpected sound seemed to shock his latest victim into sudden disobedience — for if the tyranny of love commands us to think only of the be-

loved object, Piggy, the ex-pirate, was now evidently thinking chiefly of himself. Another owl hooted, this time behind the tavern.

"Whisker!" exclaimed the ex-pirate bitterly, and then "Yaller Mustaches! They're surroundin' th' tavern — and with a wild cry the surprised lover released the widow, leaped back over the bar, scuttled nimbly across the floor, opened the door of the clock, and crowded himself backward inside of it. He was a tight fit, but managed to close the door behind him.

In all Martha Egge's experience it was the first time that she had ever known any man to tear himself from love in the very midst of a proposal of marriage and disappear into a clock. But although time had thus visibly slowed her lover before her very eyes, she kept her watch about her: and in some circumstances wits are very much more important than lovers. She instantly associated the act with the letter — but there were still a few coins in the Captain's leather bag, and Martha, as we have seen already, was not the widow to neglect trifles. Methodically, but with some little difficulty, she locked the door of the clock, dropped the key in her pocket, and smoothed out her features and her apron as she turned to greet the group of men who now entered the tap-room.

At first glance they were all men of considerable fashion, but they carried their frock coats with a rolling air altogether freer and more manly than the somewhat mincing manners affected by the dandies of the period; and their tall beaver hats were worn at a rakish angle that would have been no less disturbing to a timid observer than the wild and (what was worse) untamable faces that looked from under them. A mingled odor of tar, rum, and salt water came with them; and by this odor, as well as by their appearance, Martha Egge recognized them as part

of the company in which she had first seen the Captain. Others, as she surmised from his otherwise unintelligible exclamation, were surrounding the tavern.

"Rum," commanded the leader. He leaned a bulky figure against the bar, thrust a cigar skilfully into a neat, well-defined hole in his bushy red beard, lit the cigar, and gazed admiringly at the widow. The others leaned on the bar beside him. Soon the smoke of five strong cigars went up toward the ceiling, and the mellow invitation of liquor being poured into glasses penetrated even into the clock, and would have made the stout, imprisoned Captain stir uneasily had such action been possible. Directly in front of him his nose felt what he knew to be the back of the dial, and he twisted his neck in an effort to peer through the little aperture at which the hands of the clock usually centered. Had he been wiser, he would have stopped to think that the mere sight of a glass does not satisfy thirst ; but he kept foolishly at it until, to his surprise and horror, the dial itself joggled and then slid softly, contentedly down until it rested on his own bosom. Now he could see far better than through any mere hole in the dial, but he was apparently far from satisfied. The frame of the clock shook and shuddered with his fruitless efforts to bend his knees and lower his body. But the very violence with which he had entered the clock had wedged him firmly into it ; and although of doubtful value as a timepiece, the clock and the Captain seemed to have been made for each other.

Meantime Red Whisker leaned gracefully on the bar and smiled engagingly at the widow.

"Wot we're a-lookin' for, ma'am," he said with pleasant kind of frankness, "is a harnsome, likely feller with a penshant for marryin' an' bringin' up a fambly to sit round th' evenin' lamp like ye see 'em in pictur books."

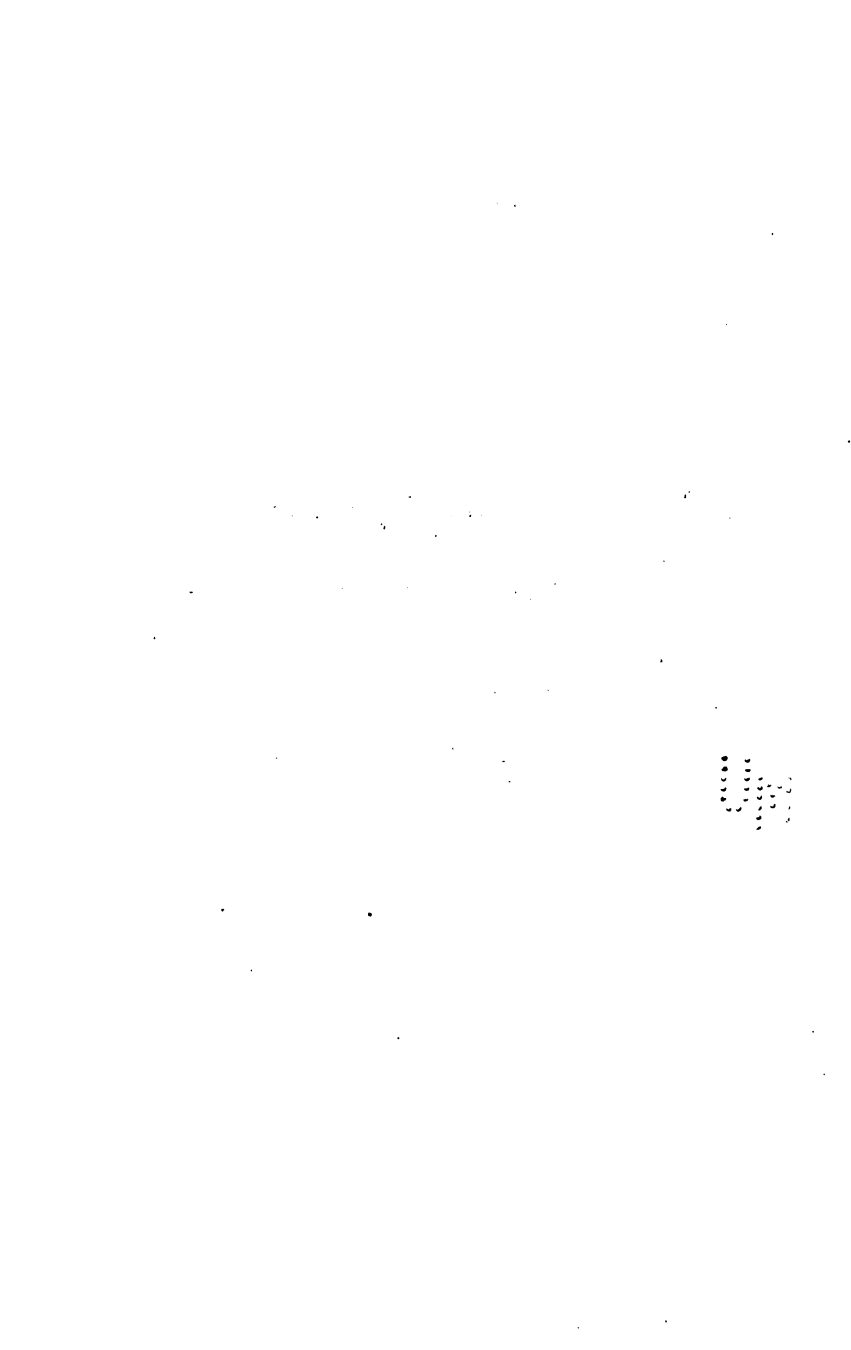
"A likely, able-bodied feller," added another, playing coquettishly with his large, brass nose-ring as if to call the widow's attention to that admirable feature ; "with a nose on him as makes him look like an uncommon intelligent swine." It was a recognizable description, but hardly the way a sensitive lover likes to hear himself described to his mistress. A wave of emotion swept over the face of the clock, and it clenched its unseen hands angrily.

"Ye see, ma'am," said Yellow Mustaches pleasantly, "he's an escaped lu-natic. We're his keepers, to put th' matter plain an' simple. An' wot we're after is to keep th' pore demented critter from marryin' anybody afore we comes up with him."

"Married six times already," said Red Whisker ; "an' it makes complications like."

Never, perhaps, has a man in a clock heard himself made the subject of so base a calumny and been so altogether unable to get at the calumniators. A drop of perspiration rolled tormentingly over the forehead of the imprisoned Captain, pursued its slow way down his nose and up over the end of it, and then fell with a splash on the sanded floor of the tavern. For a moment he feared that some of them must have heard it, but nobody turned in his direction, and soon his momentary panic vanished in the suspense with which he waited for the widow's answer. Oh ! if she would but look in his direction and let one brave, tender glance assure her of his sanity, his devotion, and his unmarried condition ! It would be hard to get it all into one brave, tender glance, but the desperate effort would at least be better than this enforced inactivity. But Martha Egge deliberately refilled the glasses, rested her elbows on the bar, and lowered her voice to a whisper.

"If you are offering a reward for him," she said mean-





A WILD EXCLAMATION BURST FROM THE CLOCK. "DE-
LILER!" IT SCREAMED VINDICTIVELY; AND CAPTAIN
JANE BOND THRUST HIS FACE FORWARD

ingly, "I shouldn't be at all surprised if I could tell you of somebody who would be glad to get it."

At that statement a wild and bitter exclamation burst from the clock.

"De-liler!" it screamed vindictively; and in his rage and indignation Captain Jane Bond thrust his face forward until it completely filled the aperture and he could neither speak nor withdraw it. Such was the amazement of his five former companions that they stood and stared at him in silence for a full minute; and, had he been able to tick, his ticking would have been painfully audible.

"Wot in blazes be you a-doin' of in there, Piggy?" asked Red Whisker presently. He was the first to recover, and the simple, natural question made them all feel better.

"Settin' round th' fambly lamp with th' missus an' th' little ones, most likely," suggested Nose-Ring with a touch of sarcasm. But it was only when Yellow Mustaches considerably pinched the Captain's nose between thumb and forefinger and pushed his unhappy face back into the clock that Piggy was able to make a comprehensible answer.

"Don't talk to me o' fambly life," he replied chokingly. "I've had enough already, an' seen enough o' women. Wot I wants now is rum an' wickedness! Just you let me out o' this ————!! ————
———!!!! ———— Grandfather, Red Whisker — an' I'll put th' cussed woman into it!"

Two hours later the tap-room was again without a public. The cash drawer stood mournfully open; the bar was littered with empty bottles; the room at first glance seemed deserted after the recent visitation of an enthusiastic cyclone. But Martha Egge glared bitterly over the edge of that very circumference which the face

of Captain Jane Bond had lately filled so completely ; and what she looked at oftenest and most discontentedly was her own cardboard motto.

Ink and a brush had added new sentiments :

"No Wife — No Strife,"

and, apparently with much labor, perhaps by Captain Jane Bond himself :

*"A Fool is He
Who Trusts a She."*

44



SOMETIMES THEY FIERCELY KNOCKED IN THE HEAD
OF A CASK, BUT MORE OFTEN THEY HOVE IT BOARD
OVERBOARD AND RAN FOR ANOTHER WITHOUT
STOPPING TO SEE THE FINE, BIG, PHOSPHOR-
ESCENT SPLASH THAT IT MADE IN THE
WATER. IT WAS AN UNUSUAL SPEC-
TACLE

DEAD MAN'S INN

ON the moonlit deck of a small, rakish-looking, black schooner, holding her eastward way across Massachusetts Bay, August 22, 182—, eight busy pirates, each wearing a long white ribbon with the inspiring word "Temperance" in gold letters, actively unloaded a miscellaneous collection of kegs, puncheons, casks, hogsheads, bottles, jugs, flasks, demijohns, flagons, and decanters of liquor into the ocean. It was an unusual spectacle. Pirates, as a rule, were more likely to be found unloading liquor into themselves. But these men were unquestionably in sober earnest. Sometimes they fiercely knocked in the head of a cask or barrel, but more often they hove it bodily overboard, and ran for another without stopping to see the fine, big phosphorescent splash that it made in the water. Like all pirates, they worked to what they honestly considered music. A handsome but repellently evil man, whose long yellow mustaches hung damp with perspiration, carried a kind of solo, and seven harsh voices wrestled with the chorus :

*" I fight with th' Demon !
I fear not his might !
My body be sound an'
My conscience be white.
Temptation, avant !
I will never succumb
No more to th' cussed
Ole Demon o' Rum ! "*

So declared Yellow Mustaches ; and even more militantly wholesome was the wild, enthusiastic chorus :

*" Rum ! Rum ! Horrible Rum !
As makes a man silly
An' then quarrelsome !
As softens his brain,
An' as tans his inside,
An' makes him speak cross
To his innercent bride ! "*

Occupation and song were alike incompatible with piracy as most of us understand it ; but any good psychologist, familiar with pirate character and aware that the Great Temperance Revival of 182- was just then in full emotional blast in Salem, would have guessed that these pirates and that revival had somehow or other come together. Piracy was decadent. Few still followed the profession in American waters, and this mere handful, unfortunately for the picturesqueness of our ports, had to be careful. It was their custom, for example, to come ashore in the garments of gentlemen travelers whom they had brutally but carefully murdered (for nothing is worse for a suit of clothes than careless assassination), and chance or curiosity might easily have led them into the Revival Tent. And once there, as all revivals testify, the worst man was likely to be the most impressionable. To-morrow, probably, they would feel a keener remorse for the good deed they were now doing than for any unspeakable crime that had ever disgraced their otherwise pretty schooner. But to-night they were enjoying a saturnalia of total abstinence.

The man with the damp, yellow mustaches tossed a keg of Bourbon XXX lightly overboard, and his vile, sneering laugh followed it.

*"With pure water to drink
When a man has a thirst,"*

inquired Yellow Mustaches lyrically,

*"Oh, why will he swaller
Th' likker accurst?
'Twill burn up his innards
An' make him become
A slave to th' cussed
Ole Demon o' Rum!"*

It was a long, happy job, well on to midnight before they had finished; and as the last hogshead bobbed away aft, they wiped their foreheads and shook hands with each other gravely. Only the ninth pirate, a stout, bald-headed, unribboned rogue at the helm, stared gloomily forward and shook hands with nobody.

"An' there's a good job done an' over with, mess-mates," said a large, powerful man, holding his thumb to the pale rays of the moon and peering intelligently, as if over a hedge of wild red whiskers, at the splinter he was about to extract with the point of his cutlas. "When that cuss in th' tent said as we'd find it a tussel to give up likker, he were off his reckonin'. Show me a good *an'* solid argymint as appeals to my mind," he added, digging remorselessly after the splinter, "an' I've a iron will as makes me able to give up anythin'. I ain't a-sayin' as I won't hanker arter a leetle wet now an' agin sociablelike, but when I says to myself: 'Leather stommick, ole feller, leather stommick — !' "

"Leather gran'mother's stommick!" grunted the bald-headed man discourteously. "Goin' ashore allus gits us inter trouble. Allus! It's as ef we was a-lookin' fer it, a-steerin' of ourselves inter strange harbors where

we ain't got no business. Drink I allus have, an' ef my stommick's a-turnin' to leather, I ain't a-noticed of it ; an' wot's more, cuss me ! I'd jest as soon have a leather stommick as any other ef it works proper. Who sees yer stommick ?" And he relapsed into an inarticulate, grumbling murmur that seemed to come from the uttermost depths of that very organ.

To this question there could hardly be more than one answer, for they all knew that he meant the lining, and at that period operative surgery was still in its hesitating infancy. And it *sounded* sensible ! You knew it was a silly question, a mere imitation of good old common sense, and yet you felt that it had to be answered.

"Th' pint is, Baldie," said the soloist, briskly twirling his handsome mustaches to get the damp out of them, "as we all know now wot likker does to ye, an' we've put enough on't into us to give it a start as I hates to think on. Nobody sees yer silly stommick cos ye're alive, so to speak, an' a-wearin' of it right side out, but ef ye was turned wrong side out an' could see yourself — " Intellectual as he might be (though he hardly looked it), Yellow Mustaches got involved in his own argument and stood twirling his moist, golden fleece helplessly, while the others waited anxiously to learn how he would finish. "Leavin' yer own stommick out on't," he continued. "Wot we've seen to-day be th' colored picturs, normal an' abnormal, an' th' Horrible Example as has a stommick jest like th' abnormal specimen ef ye cut into him. Swallerin' a snake an' havin' th' critter steal away with yer brains is all in yer eye cos ye swallows down, don't ye ? An' yer brains is stowed aloft o' where ye begins to swaller. An' as fer steerin' inter places where we ain't got no business, all I axes be who steered us in ?"

"It said 'Drink! Drink! Drink!' on th' sign outside th' tent," admitted Bald Head bitterly. "How was a seaman to know as it were a cussed prohibitioner —"

A nondescript rascal with a prominent brass nose ring yawned violently — an infectious yawn, for every one of them, except Bald Head, followed his example. It was like a menagerie when one animal begins yawning.

"An' when ye recalls as they uses alcohol to pickle a toad, like the long-whiskered goat showed us," said Nose Ring earnestly, "it stands to reason as rum pickles yer stommick. Arter seein' that pore toad —"

"I like-a zee band — Ahhhhh!" added an excitable little rascal, whose neat brass earrings were rather set off than otherwise by his bronze complexion. "Sign-a zee pledge! Put-a on zee white rib! March-a in zee processh!" Sleepy as he was, the nervous little enthusiast made a curious humming noise in his nose that they all guessed was meant for a brass band playing "Yankee Doodle," threw back his shoulders, smoothed out his white ribbon, and marched proudly six steps one way and six steps back again. Nearly everybody loves to march in a procession, although few of us are quite so willing to admit it; but the bald-headed pirate only sniffed disdainfully.

"Ef ye'd a-heard wot some o' th' sensible folks on th' sidewalks was a-sayin'," he remarked crushingly, "yer ears would a-burned till they melted yer silly earrings."

Meantime Red Whisker had dug out the splinter, and now he sheathed his cutlass, stretched his strong arms drowsily, and turned toward the cabin.

"Wot they was a-sayin', Bald Head," he remarked briskly, "don't make no difference. Wot was necessary were to change our habits afore th' stuff did us any more damage, an' we'll all feel better to-morrer fer not

havin' th' cussed likker a-stupefyin' of us without our knowin' it. Ye'll feel better yerself, tho' ye don't believe it, ole feller, an' wot I say now be as we all tumble below an' git a good night's sleep afore startin' life over. Come to-morrer mornin' an' we'll be that free o' likker as we won't know ourselves."

It was good advice, and they all stumbled after him. The wind was fair, and they left the devil to look after them. Presently the moon set, and countless infinitely distant stars dimly lighted the solitary course of the temperance pirate over the summer ocean. The last hogshead lay more than a mile behind her, and from the lonely taffrail Bald Head, thirsty and sleepless, stared wistfully after it.

The sun next morning had climbed high enough to send his rays into the cabin when Red Whisker sat up on the edge of his bunk and looked stupidly around him. It was a new day, the beginning of a new life, and the iron-willed miscreant had prepared himself for it by a good night's sleep ; but, strange to say, he felt both unhappy and irritable. He forgot his intention, the last thought before he had dropped off to sleep, of springing lightly out of bed, and humming a gay little tune to himself as he pattered up the ladder in his bare feet to see how bright and beautiful and *clean* the world would look to eyes no longer dulled by pleasant but swinish intoxication. Then (he had planned) he would flit merrily to the galley and light the fire, for, in the economy of piracy, it was Red Whisker's turn to get up first and start the breakfast. Ordinarily he did not like getting up first, but in this new, emancipated life every little thing was going to be more enjoyable ; and even getting the break-

fast, a wild, sweet song of normal human activity. To be up and doing, this lovely morning, with a clear, unclouded mind and all one's faculties working together in perfect harmony —

Red Whisker stared at his toes and wriggled them gloomily. The sunlight annoyed him. Evidently it was going to be another of those cursed dog days! And he had, moreover — perhaps because all his faculties were so much keener and brighter than usual — a curious, disgusted realization that his feet were not beautiful; he felt as though he would like to take them off and throw them at something. What were feet good for anyway? Feet! He said it contemptuously to himself — Feet! Feet! Feet! Feet! — until by degrees the word lost all meaning, became a foreign language, became no language at all — a mere sound, and a silly sound at that. Why weren't they called hands? And if they had been called hands, and hands feet, and your nose your toes, and your eyes your ears — who'd ever have known the difference? And what difference would it have made to anybody? What difference did anything make to anybody? Why were we here and where were we going? Men were born, and worried along through life, and died — and nobody knew where they came from or where they went to: a long, sad, tedious journey on these same silly feet, feet, feet, feet, feet, getting up and getting breakfast and washing the dishes and going to bed and getting up and getting breakfast and washing the dishes and going to bed and getting up and getting breakfast and washing the dishes — Never in his life had Red Whisker felt so hopelessly miserable and at the same time so despairingly resigned to it. Life was like that, he told himself, gloomy and triste (as the French say), and nothing but his own iron will to keep a man

from staying in bed till he starved and made an end of it. Just a happy skeleton under a blanket !

Red Whisker sighed heavily, took his nighty off over his head, mechanically picked up his shirt, and began somberly thinking about breakfast. Ordinarily he would have gone on deck and plunged into the ocean, but he felt this morning that he would be unable to resist the temptation of never coming up again. The white ribbon still hung from his shirt and he stared at it curiously. Then the truth burst upon him. *This* was the new life in whose fond anticipation he had dropped hopefully asleep ! ! !

In every existence there comes one moment when it is necessary to think quickly, to decide at once between two alternatives, and to act without hesitation. A leather stomach is one thing, but a leather life is another. A man with an iron will must learn to manage it ; sometimes, even, the thing must be disciplined, for slavery is slavery, whether to your own iron will or to somebody else's. With a quick, decisive oath, Red Whisker tore the white ribbon from his shirt, and, without stopping for his trousers (fearing perhaps that his iron will would grapple with him while he was putting them on), leaped up the ladder. Little he cared now for names ; call it anything you please — feet, pegs, pins, stumps, trotters, Shanks' mare, or the Marrowbone stage — his perambulatory apparatus carried him straight and true to the hold of the schooner. Nor did he pause an instant to enjoy the clean and normal beauty of this lovely summer morning. One keg, one cask, one hog's-head, one puncheon (he hoped for a puncheon !), one bottle, one jug, one demijohn, one flask, one flagon or at least one decanter *must* have survived the misplaced enthusiasm of the preceding evening. Truly it was amazing what foolish things a man could do when he

was sober! And the thoroughness of it! No keg! No cask! No hogshead! No puncheon! No bottle! No jug! No demijohn! No flask! No flagon! No decanter! Nothing but a reminiscent smell that they had been unable to throw overboard! He tore himself from the hold and sped to the taffrail; but the *Tender Polly* was still traveling steadily eastward, and as far as eye could range nothing that could possibly have held one drop of liquor bobbed hopefully on the surface. Water, water was everywhere, but, fortunately for Red Whisker's sanity, he did not know the rest of the quotation. He tore himself from the rail and dashed down into the cabin. If he could get there before any of the others were awake —

Except for Yellow Mustaches, they were awake already — and all, exactly as Red Whisker had himself prophesied, so free of liquor that they hardly knew themselves. Still in their nighties, for at that period even the most stylish gentlemen travelers had not yet adopted the pajama, four wicked but pitifully anxious men were searching the cabin; and four bare soles, cunningly side by side on the floor, indicated where two others were feverishly looking under the table. They heard him coming, and the four miscreants grabbed up their cutlasses and turned to meet him with a single cruel, suspicious impulse.

"Wot ye been a-doin' with th' pooty medicine chist, ole feller?" asked Nose Ring with an ominously repressed politeness. "I've got a pain in my stommick —"

It was a wild scene, and the sweet, clear morning sunlight combined with the peaceful garments of night and the trouserless state of their regretful but still indomitable leader to make it even more terrifying. They surrounded him like so many half-dressed tigers, roar-

ing of medicine chests and pains in their stomachs. The four bare soles, still cunningly side by side, backed out from under the tablecloth ; and in his own berth the musical pirate reared his graceful figure and sleepily curled the ends of his long, handsome, yellow mustaches.

" *He ain't got no medicine chist,*" he remarked drowsily. " *I hove th' chist overboard m'self, mess-mates.*"

Faded the last hope ; gone overboard ; thrown away ; vanished forever — and the irretrievableness of it calmed them like a dash of cold water. They sat down on their bunks and regarded each other soberly, which was the only way they had left to regard anybody. Presently each, out of the corner of his eye, looked about for Bald Head, and one after another discovered that Bald Head was missing. His bunk was empty, had not even been slept in. Nothing remained of him but a piece of paper folded and pinned to the pillow. Frankly it was a relief not to see him ; and as Red Whisker spread the paper on the table they all gathered soberly behind him and read the letter over his shoulder. Better men than Bald Head, one regrets to think, might have smiled at that letter, for pirates were rarely scholars, and Bald Head's was not an exceptionally brilliant or well-trained intellect. There were erasures ; evidently he had worked hard over it. And in one place a spot that might have been either a tear or a drop of perspiration :

Dear Old Friends — *This is from me, and I take my pen in hand to tell you, dear old friends, that when you wake up you will find it on my pill Oh ! and so will know my plan, and what I am a bout to do, and why I feel that I must do what I have done. It will X plain all. I do not think it is fair to those you love to sir prize them with what you do.*

This is my mind, dear old friends. I have all ways

drank rum, as you well know, and, all though no slave, I am too old to change my ways of life when I can not see the good of such a change. If rum can tan the in sides as they say then my in sides must be like a shoe now, and yet I know well that it works all right, and that is the main thing with an in sides. Looks do not count with me and no man but me can say how my in sides work. No one can see his in sides, but all can feel, and if mine suits me, I say let well a loan. Do not think I am a slave to rum for I am not. I can stop as quick as the next man if I wish. But I do not wish. What is more I think that to stop now would do my in sides more harm than good. By a dam site.

When buck can nears do not think the same it is time for them to part. That is sad but true. Do you not think so? It is a wrench to go but it must be done, and the soon her the bet her. Some times when you come a shore you can come and see your old friend, but I fear you will shun him when you know all.

My plan, which I spoke of, is to keep an Inn.

I have took the small boat, a come pass, food and so fourth and as I row a shore I will pick up the lick her you have cast a drift. You do not want it and it will make a fine stock in trade for my Inn. I will keep my Inn some where near Sail M and you will be one and all well come if you will come. I will not ask you to drink.

Now it is 12 Oh! clock. I hear you all snore as I write this and it makes me^s sad to go. But I see it is best for all.

I for got to say that the name of my Inn is Dead Man's Inn. Do you not think that is a nice name for an Inn?

So no more now from your old friend,

BALD HEAD.

Serious-minded pirate as he was, Bald Head had evidently had no suspicion that this same idea, minus the

tavern, might occur to his abandoned associates. Perhaps the letter suggested it. Another moment and they were all on deck hopefully examining the far horizon.

"The wind's comin' about a leetle," said Red Whisker with something of his usual briskness. "Dead Man's Inn!" he added contemptuously. "Ef we don't overhaul that cussed tavern keeper afore it fogs in, messmates, we'll make Salem and catch him as he comes up th' harbor. An' unless I'm mistaken I knows one or two taverns where they won't hesitate to ask us to drink."

A shifting August fog, rising and falling, now hid the sea and again mistily revealed it — a shimmering, iridescent plain on which a solitary pirate, in a small boat well laden with jugs and demijohns, pulled steadily toward Salem. Evidently the rascal was in no particular hurry. A striped awning, stretched on hoops and ending at the bow in a kind of blunt nose, shielded his bald head from the sun, if it should succeed in piercing the drifting fog bank, and a couple of large holes enabled him to peer out to port or starboard without changing his position. A compass and the remains of a simple breakfast of salt pork, sea biscuit, and a jug of rum rode on the stern sheets of his tiny vessel; and behind it, bobbing and swashing placidly over the long, lazy swells, followed a succession of kegs, hogsheads, puncheons, casks, and barrels skillfully lashed together. Over the opalescent sea, now delicately visible and again fogged in completely, the little procession took on something mysterious and even fairy-like. Now you saw it, if you happened to be on shore and looked seaward when the fog lifted, and now you didn't.

It was the second morning since Bald Head had left the schooner. Fortunately many of the rotund objects

of which he was in search had been sampled and floated easily in the water. He had been some time collecting them ; and now the farther he got away from piracy the more absorbed he became in the idea of keeping a tavern. Noon was approaching, and from his starboard peephole he now and then made out the lovely but not yet fashionable North Shore of Massachusetts. A few more hours and he would be in Salem.

So far, indeed, he had given little thought to the practical side of his new business ; like so many of us, the fact that he had invented such an attractive name as " Dead Man's Inn " made the rest seem easy. Nearly all pirates looked forward to keeping a tavern as the sunset finish to a wicked but busy life ; and, although Bald Head was still a young man to retire from active piracy, the nervous shock and natural despondency of seeing eight able-bodied pirates suddenly stricken with total abstinence had made him feel more or less like a grandfather. As he had written, he was no slave to rum : no man less so ; but neither, under the circumstances, was he willing to become a slave to total abstinence. Yes, he had retired with honor ; and, what was even more practical, with a fine stock in trade for Dead Man's Inn. And he saw the place plainly — a cozy sort of house with a long, sloping roof, its attractive title swinging on the signboard, and himself sitting on the hospitable porch, getting on a bit in years, perhaps, but still fat and handsome, the idol of young and old as he drained his glass and told them spicy anecdotes of his former atrocious, but always entertaining, profession. Sometimes he would sing them a wild, salt, pirate ditty. Perhaps he would marry and have a wife to do the heavy work of the inn — but that could wait with other details that he would take up as he came to them. Anyway there would be rambler roses rambling all over the porch,

and a pump in the yard to soak your head under. Altogether it was a pretty picture. The lively marching melody that his ex-associates had picked up in the temperance procession sang in his bald head as he plugged happily onward ; and he fitted his own words to it as the oars kept time mechanically :

*" I laff at th' Demon !
I fears not his might !
My stommick, I bet ye,
Is workin' all right.
It may be like leather ;
I bet ye instead
It's like th' inside o'
A jolly hogshead !*

CHORUS

*" Rum ! Rum ! Jolly ole Rum !
As makes a man cheerful
An' then frolicsome !
Oh ! milk is fer babies,
An' water fer fee-
Male wimmen, but Rum
Is th' tippie fer me !*

*" I laff at th' Demon !
I fears not his might !
My stommick, I bet ye,
Is workin' — "*

There is probably nothing more soporific than just this effort to fit new and appropriate words to a haunting melody. The wicked bald head of the inn-keeper sank

lower and lower over his oars, nodded, straightened with a jerk, and then began sinking lower and lower. The fog lifted and settled at intervals. Occasionally an inward-bound ship approached cautiously, and then altered her course and gave him a wide berth as she continued up the harbor. Now and then an outward-bound vessel sighted him, came about, and returned hastily to Salem. Along the shore knots of people, mere specks afar off, gathered on every beach and promontory and stared at him curiously. Presently a distant ringing of bells reached him, softened by the fog, but he kept plugging along sleepily. When he reached the mouth of the harbor, he told himself, he would tie up in some sheltered spot and wait for night in order to avoid attracting too much attention.

Meantime, in the pressroom of the Salem "Bee," a man in his shirt sleeves worked feverishly, composing and at the same time putting in type an article that he evidently believed could not be printed too immediately ; and across the room, crowded with excited employees of the paper, another labored with equal haste at a woodcut drawing that any intelligent schoolboy could have seen was meant for a large snake in swimming. Newspaper illustration was then young, a mere baby, but in moments of great popular excitement much could be done with a woodcut, whose appeal to the imagination was really almost as stimulating as some of our own halftones. Anybody would have known that this was a snake and not a sausage, because it had a forked tongue ; and anybody could have recognized the ocean because it had a ship on it — provided, of course, that he knew it for a ship. Indubitably, too, this was a moment of great

popular excitement. From every belfry in Salem the bells clamored nervously. From every house poured men, women, and children, heading for every street that led to the harbor. Some were bareheaded; others, more thoughtful, carried hats and lunch baskets. One might have thought the harbor was on fire, for the volunteer fire companies were also out and dragging their engines in the same direction. Even the questioning tap-tap-tap of a blind man's stick and the excited yelping of his dog penetrated into the pressroom.

"By George!" exclaimed the artist, gazing at his handicraft and unconsciously anticipating Phillips Brooks. "That is a sea serpent!" He shot a question over his shoulder: "How about fins and feelers, William?"

"The appearance of the amphibious monster now approaching our city," said the man at the galley, dictating to himself and setting the words in immortal type as he spoke, "is indescribably terrifying. His length, as estimated by Captain W. T. J. Scott and First Officer J. K. Hopper of the *Susan A. Martin*, must be at least three hundred and seventy-seven feet over all, and his circumference, roughly, about that of a hogshead."

"Fins?" repeated the artist anxiously.

"Horn-tipped fins," continued the other, in the monotonous voice that always goes with dictation, "guided the aquatic marvel as he rushed onward at about the speed of a modern locomotive, making twelve miles an hour. His blunt, whalelike nose turned questioningly from port to starboard and —"

"How about feelers?" asked the artist.

"His enormous feelers, like the antennae of some nightmare submarine insect, projected just back of his eyes, and moved regularly with his deep breathing. The sea serpent, says Captain Scott, 'emitted a monotonous

sound, something like singing, but so unspeakably horrifying to human ears that, after a brief consultation, we decided to put about and return to the harbor.' Captain Scott's remarkable narrative is fully verified by several other vessels, and by horsemen who have come in from Rockport and Gloucester, and report that the serpent was first sighted off Cape Ann early this morning.

"As we go to press the militia are marching to the harbor, where they will offer their services to the custom house authorities, as representatives of the Federal Government, and will embark at once to give battle to this redoubtable antagonist that has at last emerged from the ocean to confound science and endanger coastwise navigation. Whether or not there are more sea serpents is yet to be determined."

"Later — The militia are embarking."

"Later — The militia are going down the harbor."

"Later — It is rumored that the militia are attacking the sea serpent."

He finished his task with a flourish, and an instant later the printing press had it. But now nobody remained in the pressroom but the few who had to. Already the artist had finished his woodcut, and as the two tore down the stairs together they found the streets of Salem completely empty. Everybody, even the blind man, was at the water front: everything that could sail or row in Salem Harbor had vanished into the fog, through which the whole world seemed to be peering with anxious interest.

And then, at last, remote and muffled, the fog was penetrated by a rattle of musketry.

Far down the harbor the brave militia, sighting the monster, apparently sound asleep in the thinning fog, had indeed shot the sea serpent — right through his striped awning. And the very brains of the creature,

Bald Head himself, peered out angrily to see who had done it.

The fog lifted, hanging like a pearly, translucent ceiling just over the ocean. Oars stopped rowing, cordage creaked, and canvas rattled like artillery as vessel after vessel came to a disgusted standstill. From small boats, long boats, short boats, jolly boats, whaleboats, skiffs, dinghies, scows, wherries, pinnaces, and launches ; from barks, brigs, schooners, sloops, smacks, barkentines, hermaphrodite brigs, and everything else that could row or sail in Salem Harbor, countless disappointed eyes stared with indignant wonder at the prospective host of Dead Man's Inn. Frankly he was a woeful disappointment ! They had expected a sea serpent, majestic and appalling even in death — and Bald Head was neither dead, majestic, appalling, nor a sea serpent. All that could be said for him was that he hissed as he pointedly inquired what they thought they were doing ; and that he might have been appalling if the projection of his head from the striped awning hadn't made him look so much like a man in a barber's chair.

"Cuss me, messmates ! ef it ain't ole Baldie hisself !" exclaimed a red-whiskered seaman, leaning over the bow of a small black schooner that had come down with the others.

"Ef we'd a-used our minds we might a-guessed it," said Nose Ring. "Here we was a-waitin' for th' fog to lift a leetle afore we put to sea to head th' cussed tavern keeper off, an' not one on us had th' sense to guess as he'd look th' spittin' image o' a cussed sea serpent. Hears o' th' serpent, we do,' an' gits as narvous as feemale wimmin fer fear as th' critter will run afoul o' Baldie an' gobble o' him."

"Better fer him as he were gobbled," said Red Whisker

grimly. "Th' law's got him, pore feller ! cos he's got to explain hisself to th' port officers. Which when he tries to do," he added with somber conviction, "he'll find hisself mine host o' Dead Man's Inn in ——— ——— ——— !!! ——— !!! ——— silly earnest !"

He spoke sincerely ; and even to the usually unimaginative rascals around him, his tone lifted the host of Dead Man's Inn out from under his funny awning and hung him, feebly kicking, on a substantial gallows. For now they thought of it, every man of them realized that Bald Head was *not* the pirate to explain convincingly just how he came to be in solitary possession of an entire cargo of valuable liquor. He was by nature one of those men who the more he explained the worse it would be for him. Nowadays, perhaps, his evil but distressed companions would have allowed matters to take their course, followed him ashore, and hired an alienist. But the alienist had not yet been invented. Easy as it might be to prove Bald Head a lunatic, the rough-and-ready justice of the period had little consideration for congenital piritis. Nor would anybody have been attracted by the interesting experiment of reforming him. It was a nervous age in such matters, and preferred to hang a man rather than work over him. Even considered as the host of Dead Man's Inn, there were already more than enough tavern keepers.

"Clear th' decks fer action quiet like," said Red Whisker thoughtfully, "an' stand by to clap on all sail an' hist th' *Jolly Rover*. I've got a idee a-comin', messmates, tho' I don't jest see her —" And he sat down on the fore-castle and clasped his head desperately between his tarry hands to assist its arrival.

Meantime, happily for the pleasure of those on shore, they, at least, could not see Bald Head. The bells still clamored ; and every point of vantage had its crowd of

spectators. The "Bee" was out, and hundreds of intelligent readers, unable to see the creature itself in the mass of craft that surrounded it, were enjoying themselves with the woodcut ; which, indeed, was a good deal more satisfactory. Some had waded out into the ocean up to their necks and stood on tiptoe staring under the fog toward the distant marvel. The president of the Essex Institute argued with a visiting professor from Harvard as to whether the phenomenon denoted some volcanic upheaval on the other side of the world, probably near Japan, or whether the unusually warm summer had tempted the serpent from some unsuspected lair in the immediate vicinity. Was he old or young, modern or paleolithic ? Much depended on the answer to this question, for, if young, he probably had or would have a family. Boys sold pop corn. Ladies and gentlemen, wearing white ribbons, pointed out that rum was responsible, hitting the matter square on the head without knowing it, and getting innumerable signatures on long sheets of paper. A few observers, with the thing staring them right in the face, still insisted that *there was no sea serpent*, but they were generally regarded with abhorrence and annoyance by their more optimistic neighbors. It was a representative assembly to which the red shirts of the volunteer firemen added a flaming note of color as they manned their engines and squirted industriously down the harbor. Why they were there and what they thought they were doing would have been hard to explain, and yet, just then, it seemed perfectly natural.

"I see him !" shriled a boy on a lamp-post. "I see his tail a-wrigglin' !"

Out there on the ocean, indeed, under the mist now disappearing before a lively breeze, boats and vessels were visibly separating, as if, for some unaccountable

reason, they had quite lost interest in the wonderful sight they had been in such haste to witness. Perhaps they were satiated with horror. Outward-bound vessels continued seaward ; even at that distance they had the air of busy craft that had merely paused a moment to see how this sea serpent compared with others with which they were perfectly familiar. Rowboats and miscellaneous sail came about and were returning leisurely homeward, as if each were generously willing that some other should reap the honor of being first ashore with an account of the battle. And they, too, had the air of saying that sea serpents were all alike, and when you had seen one you had seen all of them. At the very end of the procession, visible between the few boats that still accompanied the corpse, came the monster himself.

Bald Head advanced slowly, behind him his stock in trade for Dead Man's Inn, on either side a boatload of militia, and just in front the official launch of the Salem Custom House. As for Bald Head himself, still ignorant of his mistaken identity, he only realized in a dull, hopeless way that the law had him, and that he had got to explain himself. *But could he do it ?* Already the simple statement that his ship had been wrecked and everything and everybody lost but himself and his liquor seemed to increase rather than charm away an unfriendly and suspicious attitude of the customs inspector. Evidently what we should now call a "probe" was coming, and there was just one way to prepare for it — to ask himself questions and answer them with convincing frankness. But the trouble with that was to think of the answers.

A dialogue, more and more painful, went on in his head as the oars thumped against the thole pins.

CUSTOMS INSPECTOR — "Now then, matie, what's yer cussed name?"

BALD HEAD — "John Jones, Cap'n."

CUSTOMS INSPECTOR — "I don't think much o' that name. Say it agin."

BALD HEAD — "Bill Bones."

CUSTOMS INSPECTOR — "That's more like a name, cuss me! Now, Mr. Bones, about this likker —"

BALD HEAD — "Ye see, Cap'n, when th' ship sunk, th' hatch were open, an' everythin' in th' hold floated out nat'ral-like —"

CUSTOMS INSPECTOR — "Onnat'ral-like, *I'd* say."

BALD HEAD — "Wot I means be as when th' ship got afire, th' fire exploded a keg o' gunpowder in th' hold, an' blew off th' deck, an' blew up th' likker, an' me, an' th' leetle boat —"

Really there was no way of explaining it: no way but one in which it could possibly have happened! He was not a truthful man by nature, but in this awful crisis truth was stronger than invention. If he had only some way of communicating with his abandoned associates there would still be hope for him. But, alas! where were they? Somewhere on the broad Atlantic, drinking water. Everything was against him. Even his stock in trade seemed to be pulling in the opposite direction, *was* pulling —

He looked up sullenly. There could be no doubt of it. Kegs, casks, hogsheads, puncheons, and barrels no longer bobbed serenely after his little boat, but tugged in a tautening line toward the familiar stern of a small, rakish-looking schooner. She carried all sail and was just going before the wind, after having made fast to the

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AND THE TWO BOATLOADS OF MILITIA, FIRING REMORSELESSLY AT THE SPOT THAT BALD HEAD HAD JUST RAPIDLY VACATED, PROMPTLY SUNK EACH OTHER

final hogshead. None but Bald Head had noticed the maneuver, and his heart leaped with a wild throb of joy as his astonished eye grasped the identity of a flaming patch of color just over her taffrail. The fog had lifted. The sun, still nearly an hour high, lighted that patch of color like a red beacon of hope. He knew it was Whiskers. And as the schooner went fair before the wind everything leaped tumultuously in the same direction — the *Tender Polly* herself, the stock in trade of Dead Man's Inn after her, and the prospective landlord of that merry tavern after his casks, kegs, hogsheads, and puncheons. Above the schooner floated the ghastly, fleshless smile of the *Jolly Rover*!

"Sink him!" shouted the customs inspector in a tone of authority.

And the two boatloads of militia, firing remorselessly at the spot that Bald Head had just rapidly vacated, promptly sunk each other. . . .

Several hours later, on the moonlit deck of the *Tender Polly*, nine busy pirates were emptying a hogshead, but this time they were not emptying it into the ocean. And a little apart from the others Bald Head was teaching Yellow Mustaches a new ditty.

"Th' way th' *second* verse goes, Yaller Mustaches," he was saying impressively, "be like this :

*"Ef I made my mind up
To stop drinkin' rum,
I'd do it as easy
As snappin' my thumb.
But wot be th' use?
Cos it wouldn't agree,
I bet ye, a bit with
My stommick an' me!"*

THE FRIEND OF MAN

IN a temporary deck house on the *Susan B. Martin*, ninety-eight days from Calcutta on her way to Boston, a short, fat, repulsive-looking Hindu beat a drum and tickled the feet of an elephant. One chubby brown hand wielded the drumstick. The other manipulated a broom denuded of all save a few straws, and thus converted, as if by genius, into what might have been called a tickle-broom. Had its use been more general the idea would have been worth patenting ; but in 1825, or thereabouts, elephants were still too rare except in those countries where they grow wild like flowers.

The drum throbbed incessantly. The *Susan*, with the wind on her port quarter and all sails set, jogged toward Massachusetts at the liveliest gait of which she was capable. At each beat of the drum the Hindu tickled one foot of the elephant ; the elephant lifted and shook the foot disgustedly ; and the motion of the *Susan* swayed him unsteadily on the three legs that were left him. Some elephants, like some people, may enjoy having their feet tickled, but this was not one of them. He trumpeted profanity and his wise little eyes smoldered with patient ferocity. But so long as the Hindu's sharp-pointed elephant goad lay within easy reach of those chubby fingers, the canny colossus evidently knew better than to attempt a justifiable homicide. The very sight of that cruel goad seemed to unelephant him. Now and again the Hindu, in his oily way, remarked : " Dah-dah,

merā mu'azzam Romeo sâlâ !” — which is another way of saying : “Dah-dah, my respected brother-in-law, Romeo !” — and that made the poor pachyderm more unhappy than ever. For the expression “dah-dah,” possibly because the sagacious creatures dislike baby-talk, is especially obnoxious to self-respecting elephants.

“If I was that Rumeo,” said Captain Ebenezer Teal—opening his telescope to examine a rakish-looking schooner rapidly coming up to windward, “I’d kill that coon. Yes, sir ! I’d lam him one with my pro-bo-sis —”

Mr. Tarbox, who owned the elephant, smiled.

“All for his own good in the long run,” he explained easily. “You mark my word, Cap’n, before we make Boston Tumatu-Khan-Ali will learn that beast to dance so it will be a joy to look at him. All he’ll have to do will be to hit the drum — and Romeo’ll think he’s going to have his feet tickled and just dance spontaneous. Elephants is Tumatu-Khan-Ali’s life and Art, and he knows ’em like you know navigation or I know the show business.”

Captain Teal grunted. One eye was closed ; the other peeped intently through the little end of his telescope, whose field of vision had at last lit like a tired bird on the deck of the schooner.

Had Mr. Tarbox been able to see that eye he would have known that Captain Ebenezer Teal had found something more important to think about than an elephant’s dancing lessons. Fore and aft the galloping schooner presented a scene of busy and (a thoughtless observer might have said) praiseworthy activity. Powerful, but disturbingly scampish-looking seamen scrubbed her decks vigorously ; the captain could even see the soapy steam rising from the buckets in which they dipped their scrubbing brushes. Others swept out the cabin and bravely polished its windows with rags and old newspapers. A

tall, graceful fellow, his long yellow mustaches thoughtfully tied in a kind of butterfly bow under his immoral chin, beat rugs on the forecastle. One and all their wicked heads were neatly done up in bright-colored kerchiefs like so many housewives — a quaint and tidy custom, as Captain Teal was now nervously remembering, that only pirates followed on the dustless ocean.

"The sigh-cology of the show business," Mr. Tarbox was saying, "is to watch the public just the way you're looking at that pretty vessel through your telescope. What the public is going to want next is a dancing elephant. *And educational!* —" Although he did not, and perhaps could not, explain just why a dancing elephant *is* educational, the idea gave Mr. Tarbox great internal satisfaction. He smoked and contemplated it while the grim and anxious expression of the captain's eye spread like a pale jam all over his weather-beaten countenance. One thing only had still reassured him — that along her bulwarks, where guns might otherwise have been expected, the suspicious stranger was armed only with chickens. He could see the chicken coops. But now a nose-ringed rascal lifted one of them lightly, and the chicken beneath it was a hypocritically concealed and sinister little cannon. Practically the *Susan* was already looted, and none but her captain knew it. From the deck house came the monotonous accents of Tumatu-Khan-Ali: "Dah-dah, merā mu'azzam Romeo sālā," and the woeful toots of the disgusted Romeo. Across the dancing waves his ear caught faintly the words of a cruel but contented chorus:

*"Th' good ole man, he walks th' plank,
His step is firm but slow.
Ho, boys: ho!"*

*He hits th' ocean with a spank.
His wife an' leetle daughter,
They march above th' water,
And in, kerplunk ! they go."*

Captain Teal said nothing, for now was no time to answer silly questions ; but his faded blue eye brightened perceptibly as it fell on the elephant house. If he had at last thought of something, it was high time — for that which he had falsely hoped was a chicken now laid its ominous egg in the very path of his vessel. A skull and cross-bones — nowadays, thank Heaven ! we see the horrid emblem only at the druggist's — waved from the stranger's topmast.

Confusion, at that awful sight, reigned on the *Susan*. The black cigar that Mr. Tarbox had just pointed almost perpendicularly up drooped by degrees until it pointed almost perpendicularly down. The crew cursed hopelessly. From the deck house the round eyes of Tumatu-Khan-Ali stared with mild Oriental curiosity from beneath his white turban, understanding nothing, but immensely interested. All the presence of mind left on the vessel was divided between Captain Teal and elephant Romeo. With one wise little eye on his dancing-master's back and the other on the cruel goad that the curious Hindu had momentarily forgotten, Romeo cautiously extended his trunk and picked up the hated weapon. He hid it deftly behind his left ear just as the *Susan* and the pirate both came up into the wind and lay motionless.

"All hands in th' cabin !" shouted Captain Teal. "Cut loose th' elephant !" he added briskly to Tarbox. "*It's th' only hope for us !*" Already the pirate's longboat dashed like a tiger toward its terrified quarry, and Mr. Tarbox dashed like another toward the unterrified cabin.

Behind him, in the very air, he left a trailing exclamation : " Jaldi chalo, Tumatu-Khan-Ali, háthi láo ! " or, as we would have said : " Step lively, Tumatu-Khan-Ali, bring out the elephant ! "

Accustomed to obey orders, Tumatu-Khan-Ali, evidently wondering in his mild Oriental way what trouble they all wanted at once in the cabin, disappeared leisurely in the deck house. A chain rattled, and watching faces at the cabin windows saw him reappear in the doorway. But not so leisurely ! Gone now his mild Oriental way, and also his turban ; his naked, shaven head glistened with the quick perspiration of some horrible apprehension. Around the deck he cast the piteous, appealing, searching glance of one who has mislaid something he wants, and really hasn't the least idea where to look for it. Behind him lumbered elephant Romeo, tooting gently and waving his right ear in delicious excitement although its twin on the left remained flat and emotionless. There could be no doubt whatever that Tumatu-Khan-Ali observed him. He made a fat, terrified, squeaking, wabbling, and useless effort to reach the cabin — and pale faces watched them intently as the now happy colossus caught him by his plump waist, peered inquisitively around the deck, and trumpeted with satisfaction as his gaze settled on a hogshead fastened abaft the foremast as a temporary cistern. Wag now — O elephant's tail ! Up now, O useful, Hindu-laden proboscis ! straight up and down so rapidly that bare brown feet wave for an awful instant higher than shaven cranium — and then, spank ! there is your hated dancing master sitting securely in the cistern.

Chubby brown fists beat the sides of the cask despairingly, but otherwise the familiar expression, " motionless with horror," exactly described its unexpected

contents. Horrified as they also were, the watchers in the cabin could not but exchange glances of admiration as they saw elephant Romeo remove the goad from under his ear and shake it triumphantly at the imprisoned Hindu. Then he went back majestically to the deck house ; his tufted tail, a sign of aristocracy in elephants, wagged in the doorway ; and, as they heard him grunting cheerfully to himself, everybody knew (without really knowing that they knew it) just what he was after. It might be his cussed intelligence or it might be his cussed imitation, as Captain Teal suggested in a broken whisper — anyway, he brought out the drum and went back for the tickle-broom. Almost he seemed to snicker as he placed drum and tickle-broom on the deck, sat down between them, and began alternately to whack the drum and tickle the feet of his miserable captive.

Undoubtedly an interesting and even educational spectacle, the bulwarks hid it from the approaching pirates ; and the joyous beating of the drum served only to whet their savage curiosity. No amount of sagacity can quite take the place of practice ; and, as wind and sea coasted them aft along the side of the *Susan*, the noise above (had they been more used to children) might easily have suggested the day after Christmas in the nursery of some Brobdingnagian baby. Drum and drummer were invisible behind the deck house as a savage, exultant face rose over the bulwarks — a sunburned face whose cruel teeth gripped a naked cutlas, and whose black eyes glittered like the very nose ring turned up against his forehead to avoid the possibility of dulling the keen edge of his deadly weapon. He vaulted the bulwarks, unbit his cutlas, and sprung round the corner of the deck house to face the music — but when he saw what was making it he unsprung himself so suddenly that his nose ring struck

him a sharp, unnoticed whack just above his Adam's apple. Startled as he, too, was, the revengeful and intelligent drummer put down his drumstick, got ponderously to his feet, tore loose the hogshead, and tooted contemptuously as he cast it overboard. Cask and contents traveled a long, graceful arc toward the pirate schooner and splashed mournfully into the ocean. Instinctively Nose Ring turned and ran — but not quite quick enough ; and as one foot kept right on after the other he presented the truly miraculous appearance of running straight up to heaven. But the elephant hesitated. Instead of throwing him overboard he turned him over in mid-air and examined him thoughtfully. Over the bulwarks eight other pirates swarmed together — and stayed there too short a time for the quickest observer to have described their appearance. Eight horrid mouths opened at the same instant, and eight naked cutlasses fell with one clash on the deck of the *Susan*. High against the blue they saw their brave but squalling comrade trembling toward the smiling mouth of the largest of existing animals ; and without stopping even to wave good-by to him they swarmed unanimously back again. The longboat leaped away from the *Susan*, and only paused when distance and the elevation of the waves gave them an occasional glimpse over her bulwarks.

Alas ! no Nose Ring. Only Romeo sitting contentedly in the door of the deck house. When he saw them he pleasantly waved his captured elephant goad — but to their excited imaginations the unfamiliar weapon could be nothing more nor less than an elephant toothpick.

"It's a-eaten of him up !" said the red-whiskered helmsman in a hushed voice. All as is left for us to do be to put back to th' *Polly* an' half-mast th' rover."

In a now forgotten tavern standing at that period near the Boston water front four fashionably dressed gentlemen, accompanied by a fashionably dressed Hindu, who seemed to be traveling in a servile capacity, toyed moodily with four tall glasses of rum and water. The Hindu, however, took his glass of water without the artificial improvement (as some think it) of the liquid demon, and, as he sat on his haunches to sip this innocent beverage, the tails of his blue frock coat dragged on the sawdust-covered floor and the top of his tall hat rose just above the level of the rum-stained table. Like all Hindus under such circumstances, he was completely motionless, and his hat served as a convenient elbow rest for a gentleman who gazed hopelessly at his own glass of rum and water, and was so finely and redly-whiskered that only his eyes were visible.

"Wot beats an' worries me, messmates," said this gentleman presently, "is th' way we're all a-losin' of our thirst. Mebbe we'd a-done as well to stay aboard th' vessel like th' rest o' th' company. Every time I takes a swaller I thinks o' pore ole Nose Ring — an' every time I thinks o' pore ole Nose Ring I loses th' good taste o' th' licker. Wot's th' use o' grief anyhow?" he added savagely.

A gentleman whose long nose and negligible chin gave him, one might say, an intelligently piglike expression answered the question.

"No use whatsoever," he replied flatly. "Wot we got to do, Whisker, is to take a brace an' worry along without him." And before anybody could stop him, he had taken a deep, sobbing breath and was energetically sweep-

ing away their gloom with a lively ditty. Determined fellow that he was, he began it cheerily enough to brighten up anybody :

“ *Oh-h-h-h-h !*
We likes our glass
With a roly-poly lass
A-perched on a pirus’s knee !
Ho-ho ! Ha-ha-ha ! Ho-ho !
But when we have bussed,
Ta-ta, we must
Be off to th’ rollin’ sea.
Ho- ho ! Ha-ha-ha ! Ho-ho !
For to felonies dire our souls aspire.
We rob, rob, rob with glee.
’Tis a lovely job to rob, rob, rob.
So here’s to pirusce ! ”

It was a fine, high-spirited effort, but the others only looked at him curiously and it began to peter out before he was halfway through it.

The bartender, reading the Boston “ Courier ” behind the bar, glanced up from his newspaper. “ I suppose you gents are going to have a look at the elephant,” he remarked casually. “ Cap’n Eb Teal of the *Susan Martin* was in here only this morning. Brought th’ beast out from Calcutta three months ago, and now he’s going to transport him over to N’York next week. There’s an ad-vertisement of him somewhere in the paper.” Evidently this bartender was one of those individuals who never miss an opportunity to read something aloud to you, for he pinned them with his glittering eye as he feverishly searched the “ Courier ” for the promised advertisement :

ELEPHANT ROMEO FROM CALCUTTA

"The lovers of natural history, and the curious generally, are informed that the great dancing elephant Romeo, lately imported from Calcutta by P. Tarbox, Esq., will be on exhibition three more days at the Elephant Museum. As several common elephants have before been introduced into this country, great pains were taken, in obtaining this, to select one remarkable for the fineness of his proportions, his prodigious strength, great sagacity, and, at the same time, his known prudence, coolness, and exact obedience. A mahout or native keeper accompanied him out, and his superiority to those of his species who have preceded him was displayed during the passage in numerous instances, in one of which he defended the vessel against a determined assault by over one hundred desperate and well-armed pirates. He is ten years old and weighs between seven and eight thousand pounds — N. B., N. B., N. B. At regular intervals Elephant Romeo will illustrate the dances of elephants as performed in their native jungles on festival occasions — a very educational and instructive spectacle. Also the labors of elephants as the 'Friend of Man,' when he will lift several large boxes to the very top of the Museum. Admission, 12½ cents. Hours, from nine in the morning till nine in the evening."

The end was hurried, for other patrons were now demanding the bartender's attention and he had to finish his reading at a husky canter. But the four gentlemen were tremendously interested. One, who had not yet spoken, nervously curled and uncurled his long, graceful, yellow mustaches. And the fourth gentleman pushed his tall hat on the back of his head, mopped his high forehead, and leaned across the table.

"It's th' same — — — — — !!!!! —"

——— elly-fant!" he whispered vindictively.
"Last time we see him, he were a pickin' of his teeth —"

At that reminiscence a shudder ran round the table.

"Stow th' pickin' o' his teeth, Bald Head," said Red Whisker fiercely, "cos we can't stand it. Grief's grief, an' eat up by a elyphant is eat up by a elyphant. But th' reason o' these onmanly tears, messmates, is as we haven't avenged pore ole Nose Ring, an' there's th' long an' short on't. I thought on it m'self when we picked this leetle ediot up," he added, and lifted the Hindu's tall hat as if to make sure that he was still under it, "an' if so be as he could have spoke English an' told us th' vul-nerable pints o' a elyphant, we'd a-gone back, businesslike, an' avenged th' pore innocent immejit. Wot we got to do, gen'lemen all an' merry companions, be to lay for that Mu-seum — *an' study th' elyphant.*"

It was a bold but practical suggestion and brought them all to their feet with the same cautiously murderous impulse. No more wet eyelids : revenge dried that moisture, and they were almost gay as they left the tavern, linked their arms together, and turned toward the Elephant Museum, which was not very far distant. To locate it more definitely would add another historic landmark to Boston and increase the congestion of an already inconveniently crowded business section. Behind them toddled the fat little Hindu, obsequiously carrying their four gold-headed canes ; but although many citizens paused to look at them with the cold but polite curiosity characteristic of that city, none suspected them of being avengers on their way to business. They reached the Museum, relieved the Hindu of their canes, and Red Whisker snapped his fingers significantly.

"Squat-tee!" he commanded, and the Hindu settled obediently on his fat little haunches.

Minute dragged slowly after minute. The Hindu squatted patiently and waited for the four pitiless avengers to finish a careful preliminary study of the unquestionably large job that they had undertaken. A few pedestrians stopped and looked at him curiously, and then others; the immobility of the Hindu seemed to be infectious; simply by doing nothing at all, and doing it so well, he stopped traffic. Soon he was surrounded by other immobile figures, all looking at him with the intense and absorbed interest of busy people waiting to see something happen! Out in the middle of the street other busy people stood on tiptoe or climbed on teams that had stopped under the same hypnotic influence, trying with infinite patience to make out what wonderful thing the fortunates nearer the door were looking at. Others made no effort to look over the heads of those in front of them, but just stopped and waited, as if convinced that they would eventually grow tall enough to see without difficulty. Presently in the distance could be heard the monotonous bell and voice of the Town Crier: "Ma-ny per-sons assembling. Something is hap-pen-ing at the E-leph-ant Mu-se-um. I don't know what, so don't ask *me*. Ma-ny per-sons—" Mr. Tarbox, up town on an errand, heard it and came back in a hurry. But there was then no finely organized police to make a passage along the sidewalk, and it was some minutes before he found himself looking down at the top of a tall hat that seemed to be the center of so much intelligent interest. He lifted the hat and peered under it.

"Tumatu-Khan-Ali!" cried Mr. Tarbox, "Kâhan Jahan-mam men se âe?"—even in his excitement he found the Hindustani for our own natural expression: "Where the devil did *you* come from?"—and without waiting for an answer he hurried the delighted Hindu into the box office.

Meantime inside the Museum the four pitiless avengers studied the elephant. A mild light, filtering through tissue paper pasted over the windows, softly illuminated him, for in those days the 12½-cent public demanded little in the way of refined architectural splendor. The Museum, in fact, had sheltered retail trade before it sheltered Elephant Romeo; and Mr. Tarbox had been content to provide an entrance for his carefully selected proboscidian, which also, after the door was closed behind him, left space for the lobby and box office. Fortunately the store had been lofty. A wide beam across the upper part of it not only supported the chandelier, but added greatly to the educational value of the exhibition—for this beam was also an imaginary vessel, to which Romeo, as a "Friend of Man," would later elevate a number of small boxes hypocritically labeled: "books," "sugar," and "potatoes."

In this environment the fine proportions of the intelligent mammal bulked even larger than on the deck of the *Susan*. He overshadowed and almost hid his mahout, sitting on a drum behind him and staring so moodily at the straw-covered floor that little could be seen of him save the top of a shaven head, whose bumps and hollows would have terrified a phrenologist. But lovers of natural history, and even the curious generally, are rarely phrenologists; they incline more to sentiment, and their general feeling was that the mournful mahout dreamed homesickly of a mud-walled cottage and a lot of baby mahouts playing elephant in the garden. As for the avengers, they hardly looked at him. Standing in a discouraged, but still hopeful, row, they examined Romeo from tail to proboscis.

The minute hand of the clock at the other end of the exhibition room reached and passed the hour, and the

sagacious elephant, watching it carefully with his wise little eyes, waved his ears and tail nervously. He looked again at the clock and then at his mahout; twisted his solidity on ponderous legs, and touched the bent brown shoulder lightly with his long, useful proboscis. The man started. He in turn glanced at the clock, shrugged his shoulders, and, with the weary air of one who realizes that the time has come for a familiar and tiresome duty, got up slowly and moved the drum and the three hypocritical boxes of books, sugar, and potatoes out in front of the elephant. He was a tall, well-made fellow, without hair or eyebrows, his mahogany-brown body naked to the waist except for the single Oriental adornment of a shining brass nose ring, and his bare brown feet equally immodest at the bottoms of sky-blue pantaloons, Orientally fashioned to be constricted by drawstrings and bag at the ankle. With a thrill of joy the on-lookers realized that he was about to exhibit the elephant—but the mahout seemed utterly bored by the whole silly business. He bowed bashfully without looking at anybody, seated himself cross-legged, and began beating the drum in a regular but perfunctory manner. The elephant, in an equally regular but perfunctory manner, stood first on one set of legs and then on another. If this was the way elephants danced on festival occasions one might well wonder what they did at funerals.

"Seems as if I'd seen that feller afore somewhere," said Red Whisker doubtfully. "I can't jest place him, but them lineaments do seem familiar like."

Standing as the four were, in the very first row of spectators, the words reached the mahout. He glanced up quickly, and then down again—and even under that rich mahogany color, lighter in some places, as if his complexion might be wearing off, they saw a blush of

embarrassed shame start up his spine, spread rapidly over his shaven head, and continue presumably all over his hairless but hidden countenance. If he had been out of sympathy with his occupation before, it now seemed to make him perfectly miserable: he beat the drum vigorously, and Romeo danced with a nervous and (for an elephant) graceful agility far more suggestive of a real festival occasion in his native jungle.

"Wot's th' matter of *you*, ole feller?" asked Yellow Mustaches genially, "blushin' like a leetle pe-ony —" And he leaned carelessly forward to poke the embarrassed mahout in the ribs with his playful walkingstick. Only Romeo noticed him, but that was sufficient. His wise little eyes glittered indignantly, and without stopping his dance he extended his trunk and picked up Yellow Mustaches. Speechless with astonishment, for he had really meant no harm to anybody, Yellow Mustaches floated gracefully toward the top of the Museum. And now Elephant Romeo danced on his hind legs, and set the still speechless rascal down on the cross-beam exactly as if he, too, had been labeled "books," "sugar," or "potatoes." Lovers of natural history, the curious generally, and the three remaining pirates stood and stared up at him, wondering for a moment whether the spectacle was not, after all, something unexpected but educational that they had each paid 12½ cents to witness. And it unquestionably pleased the Friend of Man far better than putting up lifeless and unresisting boxes of imaginary merchandise. He lifted a second gentleman beside the first, and was just lifting the third when the startling thought occurred to everybody at the same moment that if this sort of thing continued he would eventually lift them all up one after another. Then came panic — and as one man, woman, and child the

lovers of natural history and the curious generally made for the exit.

But to Red Whisker, now unhappily on the very outer circumference of the pushing half-circle, it seemed as if a million men, women, and children stood stock still in front of him. First he tried to climb over them; then he tried to crawl under them; then he tried to run round them; and all the time he shouted anxiously for them to hurry. It was a useless and wearing effort, but he kept busily at it, and his plaid legs still moved vigorously even after he, too, was up on the beam.

Pitiless as they still were, the four avengers sat in a disheartened row as they peered warily down into the Museum. Through the small windows that ventilated it on their present level they heard monotonously the distant bell and voice of the Town Crier: "Sev-er-al well-known cit-i-zens killed by the e-du-ca-ted e-leph-ant. I don't know who they are, so don't ask *me*. Sev-er-al well-known cit-i-zens —" Look at it as they might, it was a strange, uncomfortable, and even foolish position, and the mahout himself seemed to agree with them as he sat on the drum and twiddled his fingers in evident mental perplexity.

"Wot's th' matter of him," whispered Red Whisker to Bald Head. "Looks to me jest like th' silly feller had somethin' on his mind an' was too cussed ashamed o' himself to say it easy-like."

"Ef there was a feemal gal hereabouts," whispered Piggy, "I'd say as how he were a-goin' to propose marryin' of her."

"Ef it wasn't his silly business," whispered Yellow Mustaches, "I'd bet ye a doubloon as he was ashamed o' himself to be seen in them sky-blue pants playin' a drum for a elyphant."

"The way it strikes me," whispered Bald Head, "is as any two-legged man *ought* to feel foolish havin' a great barn o' a elly-fant allus a-lookin' at him so lovin'-like."

Intelligent though illiterate as they were, almost any of us would have agreed with them had we, too, sat on that dusty beam and peered warily down into the Museum. But now the doubtful mahout seemed to reach some definite decision. He got up slowly, picked up a tall hat that had rolled into the corner, settled it firmly over his shaven cranium, and apparently felt more self-respecting in proportion as he felt less naked. He cleared his throat hoarsely, and was evidently about to speak when the door opened and ten more or less determined men insinuated themselves cautiously into the Museum. Six of these men wore tall hats decorated with the neat leather medals that in those days distinguished the constabulary. The seventh, who was half asleep, still wore a nightcap and carried a lighted lantern in one hand and a billhook in the other—evidently a night watchman who lived in the neighborhood and had been hastily summoned from his daily rest to assist the constables. An air of authority marked the eighth as the City Marshal himself, and close behind him came Mr. Tarbox and Tumatu-Khan-Ali.

"Where's the mutilated bodies?" demanded the Marshal sternly; "where's the pitiful remains of the brave men who have been killed by your infernal elephant. Law and order, sir, are supreme in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Examine the premises, gentlemen."

Spurred by his voice, the six constables began solemnly poking about the Museum; but the night watchman, seeing no immediate need of his services, leaned philosophically against the wall and resumed his slumber.

Little he dreamed, if he dreamed at all, that the similarity of his billhook to an elephant goad had already attracted the attention of Tumatu-Khan-Ali; and he merely smiled in his sleep as the little Hindu took the weapon away from him. Only Romeo saw him. His startled gaze had never left Tumatu-Khan-Ali since the Hindu entered — and now the sight of a thing so like an elephant goad in those chubby hands completely unelephanted him. Well he knew what was going to happen! Tears gathered in his wise little eyes and he whimpered despairingly, but the constables were all too busy to pay any attention. Twice Tumatu-Khan-Ali sarcastically repeated “Dah-dah, merā mu’azzam Romeo sālā,” and each time, with a bitter and unctuous enthusiasm, he jabbed the gentle pachyderm with the watchman’s billhook. Fortunately it was a dull billhook — and before he could continue his cruel operations the other mahout had him by the coat collar. The revengeful Hindu shook till his teeth rattled, the billhook dropped uselessly from his chubby fingers, and the search for well-known citizens stopped with equal abruptness.

“Jab my elephant, will ye — ye fat leetle mud-faced son o’ a onmentionable feemale jelly-fish!” roared the voice of the shaker; and as that voice came up to them the four unseen watchers nearly fell off their beam in quick, delighted recognition. Now they knew why he had blushed and hesitated to reveal himself; for who that has led the wild, free life of a pirate wishes to be seen by those who love him slavishly exhibiting a dancing elephant to natural historians and the curious generally? It was like Jonah all over again! Nose Ring lived! — and an excited cloud of dust almost concealed the beam as the four brave but self-preserving fellows barely saved themselves from impulsively leaping down to embrace

him. But nobody noticed it, for now the bare brown foot of the unswallowed pirate was industriously kicking Tumatu-Khan-Ali across the Museum. Three stout constables clung to him desperately, but even so the indignant corsair managed to give the fat little Hindu a final lift that turned him a complete somersault and sat him down with loud, solemn spank at the far end of the exhibition-room.

"Arrest that man, Mr. Marshal!" cried the elephant proprietor sharply. "He's a professional pirate!"

"An' proud of it!" roared back the rover. The place echoed with the righteous wrath of one who has been put upon first and betrayed afterward. "Wot I wouldn't be nohow," he continued bitterly, busy as a bee with the three constables, "is a pin-souled man as steals another feller's clothes, an' shaves off another feller's eyebrows, an' dyes him all over a nasty brown, an' makes a silly public show of him—just acos a elephant has took a likin' to him!" The explosion shook him so violently that it shook off the constables; he got his broad back against the wall and stood waiting—a splendid figure of a man whose nose ring, upturned and twisted to one side in the struggle, gave him the proud, aristocratic look of one who glares through a monocle.

"Here I be!" he added defiantly, "an' I'll give another leetle leather medal to any fool corn-stable as can take me livin'!" Perhaps it was the sneer that did it, for the entire body of constables leaped upon him together. The wall trembled with an impact that woke up the night watchman; and even Mr. Tarbox and Tumatu-Khan-Ali saw the immediate necessity of hurling themselves into the combat. Across the Museum, Romeo strained at his leg-irons and trumpeted anguish at being unable to come to his friend's assistance. From

the crossbeam, leaning so far over that they stared helplessly between their own feet, the four avengers saw the squirming mass twice stagger toward the elephant, and then retire as rapidly into the corner. Then, for a brief moment, the face of Nose Ring appeared like an angry sun rising majestically above a troubled sea of constables.

"Rum-eo ! Rum-eo ! Rum-eo !" he cried commandingly, "lower away piruts !" And with one hand, to whose wrist clung the still sleepy watchman, he pointed frantically to the four brave fellows looking at him from between their feet.

Here, if ever, was an appeal to the prodigious strength and great sagacity ; to the known prudence, coolness, and exact obedience ; to the surpassing power, judgment, and dexterity of an elephant that Mr. Tarbox had taken great pains to select for these very qualities. Even to-day, when elephants are so much more familiar, it would perhaps be unwise to say that Romeo comprehended exactly what Nose Ring was after. But he knew undoubtedly that the endangered pirate wanted him to do something with the gentlemen on the crossbeam ; and, as he had already put them up, the only thing he could think of was to take them down again. Twice he bowed profoundly, as if to assure them that he meant no damage, and twice he pointed with his useful trunk at the writhing mass in the corner. The four understood him. They all bowed affirmatively, and the sagacious creature, standing again on his hind legs, lifted them gently down one after another. Last to go up, Red Whisker was naturally first to come down ; he grabbed up the billhook, leaped toward the corner, and hardly knowing what he did or why, he hooked that ingenious weapon around the nearest ankle, vigorously withdrew a constable, and slung him to Bald Head.

Truly does desperate need, in the case of men whose whole professional life is one long emergency, make for prompt and efficient action! It was team-play that did it. Bald Head stopped in his tracks, caught the constable, and slung him to Piggy, Piggy slung him to Yellow Mustaches, Yellow Mustaches slung him to Romeo, and Romeo stood delightedly on his hind legs and put him up on the beam. They all worked diligently. In less than five minutes they had put up everybody in the Museum except themselves; and even as they wiped the perspiration from their firm but incorrigible features, Red Whisker peeked through the door, closed it quickly, and turned to Nose Ring.

"Can ye lead this Rumeo, ole feller?" he asked sharply.

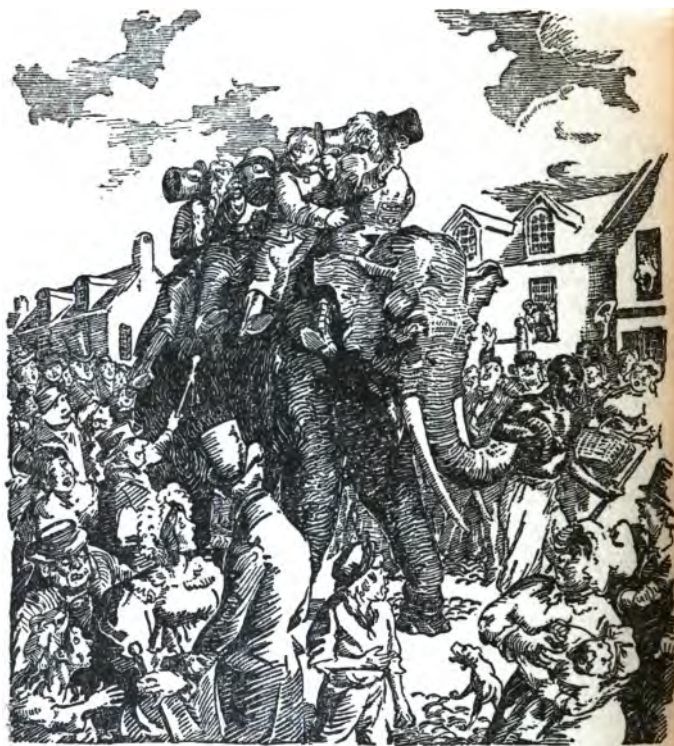
"Like a kitten," replied the rescued pirate. "Took a fancy to me he did th' minit he seen me; an' th' fust time I hit th' drum accidental-like, cuss me ef he didn't set hisself a-dancin'! Wot I'd like to do, Whisker, is to take him back to th' cozy leetle island, cos he don't like th' show business a ——— !!!!! ——— bit better'n I do m'self."

Red Whisker nodded sympathetically, but shook his head as he glanced at Romeo.

"It can't be done, Nose Ring," he replied firmly, "cos there ain't no way to carry him. Wot we got to do now," he added, with the air of inspiration that they all recognized, "is to arrest th' poor critter, ride him through that cussed crowd down to th' water-front, and git aboard our leetle tender afore anybody thinks o' stoppin' of us."

Meantime the ever-increasing crowd outside the Museum overflowed the lobby and rubbed noses against that very door through which Red Whisker had just been peeking. It filled the street in either direction. Over

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ON ROMEO'S BACK SAT FOUR CONSTABLES LIKE SO MANY
MAYORS IN A LABOR-DAY PROCESSION

its countless heads came faintly the bell and voice of the Town Crier : " Ter-ri-ble con-flict rag-ing at the E-leph-ant Mu-se-um. The con-stab-u-la-ry are ar-res-ting the das-tard-ly e-leph-ant that has mur-dered sev-er-al well-known cit-i-zens. I don't know who they are, so don't ask *me*. Ter-ri-ble con-flict rag-ing — " Suddenly the door of the Elephant Museum yawned itself open, and all in the lobby recoiled so violently that the movement communicated itself, layer by layer, to the most distant and patient spectators.

Elephant Romeo moved ponderously into the lobby. His trunk was hooked sociably into the arm of his mahout. On his broad back sat four constables who evidently expected an ovation, for they held their leather-medaled tall hats carefully in front of their faces like so many mayors in a Labor-Day procession. Impossible as such a thing would have seemed earlier, the vast concourse of interested Bostonians opened before the elephant and closed behind him like a lump of dough when the housewife pokes it with her, thoughtful forefinger. Startled voices — and yet with a thrill of patriotic local pride in them — spread the information that the dancing elephant had been arrested. One impulsive citizen cheered wildly, and even before he could be ashamed of himself the piping note had swelled into an all-embracing roar of admiration. But the modest fellows on the elephant's back still hid their blushes behind their leather-medaled hats, and bowed gravely now to one side and then to the other. Now the crowd was all behind them, and already some of the cooler heads were beginning to wonder where their captive was taking the constables, for the procession had moved majestically down State Street and was stepping grandly out on the long pier that here extended into the harbor.

The pier was empty — even the population of the warehouses on either side had gone uptown to see what wonderful thing was happening — and it stretched before them like a long street leading to a jumping-off place. Here and there, between the warehouses, they could see vessels lying at the wharf and tugging stoutly at their hawsers as ebbing tide and offshore breeze pushed them away from it. A few more steps and they would all be safe in their swift little tender — and let anybody who could catch up with them !

“Wot’s th’ matter of him now ?” exclaimed Yellow Mustaches suddenly. “Wot’s he a-stoppin’ for ?” and he clung tightly to Bald Head, who clung to Piggy, who clung to Red Whisker, who, with his knees under the creature’s ears, clung tightly to Romeo. Hardly had he spoken when the sagacious animal lifted Nose Ring and was again in motion. But now he trotted between two warehouses straight out on the deck of a vessel.

“Cuss me ef he ain’t found th’ *Susan B. Martin* !” cried Nose Ring delightedly. “An’ there’s his leetle house as he used to live in !”

They cast off the hawsers, and Romeo himself, feeling the press of wind on his big intelligent body, promptly opened wide his ears and increased the sail area. The wharf dropped away from them, but only when every sail was set did the brave (yet really unadmirable) fellows pause to look behind them. Across the sunset-tinted water half the city seemed to be watching them with an absorbed and intelligent interest. And down the wind came the faint, monotonous accents of the Town Crier : “Con-sta-bles ta-king the ar-res-ted e-leph-ant to Long Wharf. I don’t know why, so don’t ask *me*. Con-sta-bles ta-king the ar-res-ted e-leph-ant — ”

THE QUEEN OF GIRLS

IN the tap-room of an old-time Boston tavern whose existence eighty odd years ago has escaped the antiquarians, a tall, fashionably swallow-tailed, and yet indescribably wicked gentleman absently twirled his long, handsome yellow mustaches and stared as if fascinated at a want advertisement in the *Boston Transcript*. Usually at this twilight hour the tap-room was empty ; but to-night eight other fashionably swallow-tailed gentlemen leaned on the bar together, and the front view of them surprised and even vaguely terrified Rafael McGinnis.

Gentlemen, unfortunately, are not always *good* men, but never before had this practised barkeeper seen nine in a row who struck him instantly as having not one moral, nor one ninth of a moral, among them. Patriotic Bostonian as he was, he defined them as foreigners, tanned by a lengthy sea voyage and flavored conversationally by salt association with common seamen. One, at least, the well-read barkeeper localized as a Russian by his barbaric whiskers ; and another as an Italian by his frivolous ear-rings. But the gentleman with a large brass ring in his nose stumped McGinnis completely.

"Wot's all this about a gal, barkeep?" asked the gentleman of the yellow mustaches — probably a Dane, thought McGinnis — as he imbibed a slow, gurgling swallow of rum-and-water, with his thumb on the want

adv. Picking up the paper casually, the pretty word GIRL, it seemed, had immediately attracted his attention.

"Housework, sir," answered McGinnis. A domestic man (like most barkeepers), he knew the item, upside down, by a kind of instinct. "Some poor devil wants a girl for general housework."

"Allus with a lively eye for a gal, is Yaller Mustaches," said the Russian genially. He was a fine figure of a man, probably a grand duke, with wild red whiskers starting so near his eyes that his wink at McGinnis produced the odd and striking effect of hastily swallowing one of them. "An' wot's gen'ral housework, ole feller?" he added, as if the expression struck him as quite new and possibly interesting.

For perhaps five seconds Rafael McGinnis stared at his customer. Then he remembered that the man was a foreigner and perhaps unfamiliar with American customs.

"Cooking," he explained good-naturedly. "Washing dishes. Sweeping and dusting. Wives can't do it, you comprehend, and so it's 'Girl Wanted,' as your friend has noticed. Theoretically, you hire the girl, the girl does the housework, and your wife cultivates herself." To every gentleman of them it was evidently a new and interesting notion. A girl to do housework! The Grand Duke made a surprising confession. "I hates to wash dishes," he exclaimed emphatically. "Tell us about these gals as ye hires to do it, barkeep."

Rafael McGinnis refilled the glasses, deftly wiped the bar with his coat sleeve, and set them in a row before his amazing customers. Domestic man as he was, the idea that anybody could be so foreign as to be ignorant of the Servant Girl Question (as we nowadays call it) was itself so foreign that he had to get used to it. He was accustomed to the periodical necessity of finding a girl for Mrs.

McGinnis and had imagined the desperate and almost hopeless adventure to be the lot of married men the world over. But here was a grand duke who evidently did his own dishes! And it suddenly occurred to the intelligent barkeeper that many of the girls whom he had secured for Mrs. McGinnis were themselves foreigners.

"In *this* country," he explained affably, "we live under the constellation Virgo—a winged girl likely to fly away at any moment. The first thing that happens when a young woman marries is that she gets too feeble to do the housework. Therefore, you comprehend, gentlemen, her husband must hire an unmarried woman to do it for her. That's why they're called girls," he added, with a smile of appreciation for his own neat humor.

"But ef that's th' way it works," asked the gentleman with the nose-ring keenly, "why don't he marry one o' th' gals fust as he hires arterwards?"

"She'd get just as feeble," said McGinnis. "It's part of matrimony. And what makes it worse is that girls are getting scarcer and scarcer. They all want to be sempstresses. Take my own case, gentlemen, a plain, moderately cultured man with a delicate wife who just goes noivoisly al-to-pieces if she cooks a dinner. And that delicate woman, if you'll believe me, broke in seventeen girls in two months before we got Violet. It was the dark hour before the dawn, gentlemen, for Violet is the Queen of Girls. And when any girl *suits* Mrs. McGinnis three months running, you can bet she's a beauty."

"Plump an' roly-poly?" asked Yellow Mustaches mischievously. "Red cheeks? Eyes like blue sassers? Mebbe a leetle dimple?"

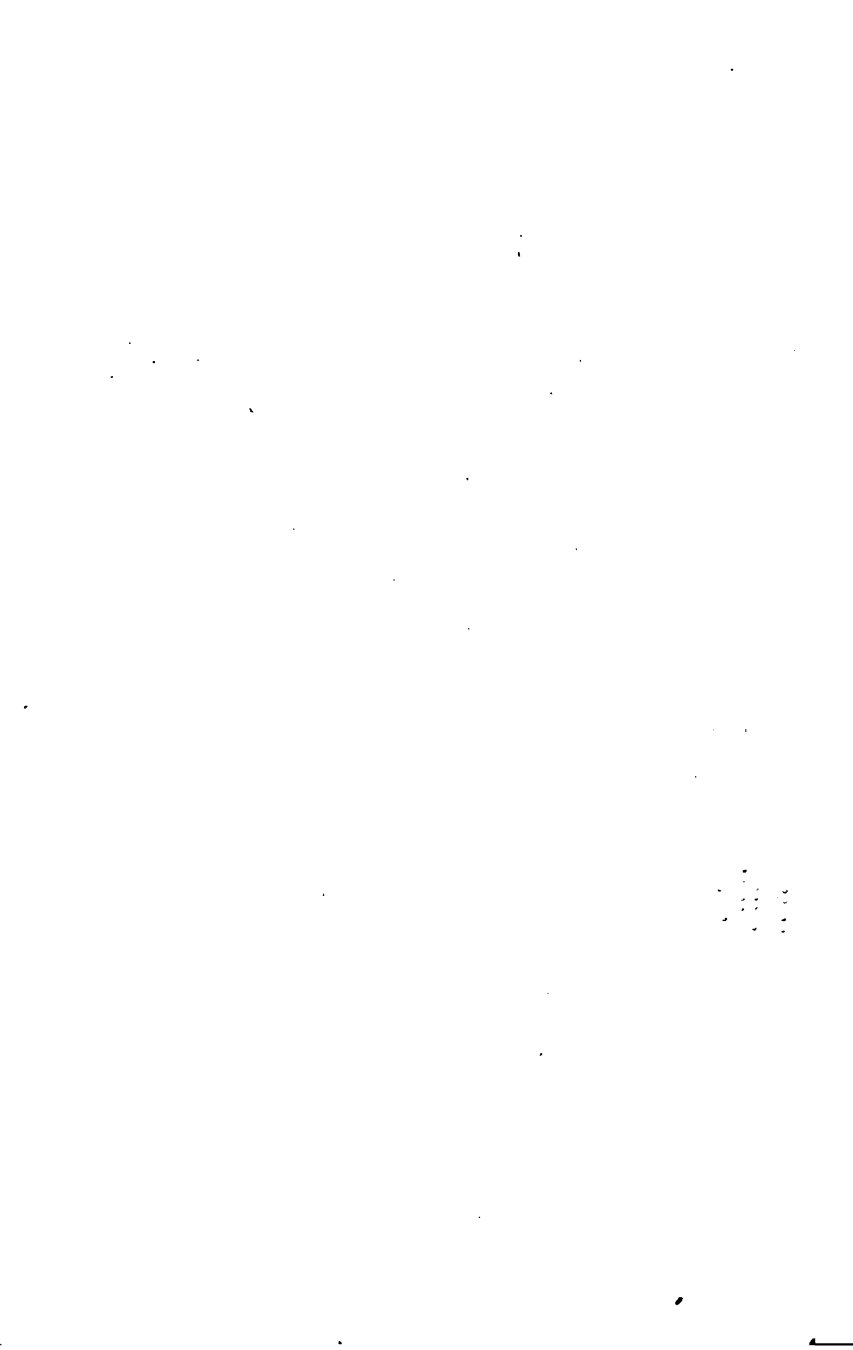
McGinnis grinned at the description. "If you're still here when Violet brings my supper, this being my night on duty," he replied discouragingly, "you'll see the

clock stop. Handsome is as handsome *cooks*, gentlemen. If she didn't get restless every now and then and make me raise her wages " — the testimonial faded to silence as he glanced at the doorway.

The nine gentlemen turned slowly, without lowering their glasses, and regarded the Queen of Girls, who now stood on the threshold. Then, as if one mind acted on their nine bodies, they turned together and regarded the clock. *It was still going!* Perhaps it had not yet seen Violet; perhaps it had heard her coming and looked quickly in some other direction. As *they* saw her, she was about the height of Napoleon Bonaparte, perhaps a third wider, and with much the same inscrutable expression of conscious power; but, unlike Napoleon, she wore a small black bonnet and a fixed smile of determined good-nature. Yellow Mustaches hit it off nicely when he told his nearest neighbor in a startled, disappointed whisper that she really reminded him of a jack-o'-lantern sitting for its daguerreotype.

Looking neither right nor left, she crossed the tap-room, deposited a stout carpet-bag in front of the bar, and lifted a good-sized hamper to the top of it. An aroma, delicious and unmistakable, emanated from the hamper, filled the room with an intoxicating suggestion of good roast beef smothered in the passionate embrace of sweet young onions — and made the foreign gentlemen quite forget their manners. They sniffed audibly. Their eyes glittered; they exchanged quick, significant, hungry glances. The handsome Dane, strolling carelessly to the door, locked it softly, and put the key in his pocket.

As for McGinnis, with the pale, distressed features of a man and husband who recognizes the quick approach of a domestic crisis, he leaned over the bar and stared down at the carpet-bag.





MUTTON CHOP DASHED HIS HAT TO THE FLOOR IN A FRENZY. "H'I WON'T 'AVE H'IT!" HE EXCLAIMED VEHEMENTLY. "H'IF H'IT'S A CHOICE BETWEEN ME AN' A FEEMALE, H'I LEAVES THE COMPANY."

"Nonsense!" he said, pointing at the bag and assuming a jocular kind of sternness. "You're not going to leave us, Violet? *Nonsense!* NONSENSE!"

"Oi'm on the wing, sorr," replied Violet simply. "Oi say no worrd against Mrs. McGinnis —"

"I hope *not*," said McGinnis quickly, and smiled tactfully at his fading Violet. "Mrs. McGinnis is very fond of you, Violet. Only this morning, she said to me, 'Mac, don't you think Violet ought to have five-fifty a week?'"

"An' bein' as we're off on that tack, Vi'let," said the red-whiskered gentleman, also smiling insinuatingly, "wot's th' matter o' six?"

It was a mean thing to do — the meanest thing, perhaps, that even to-day complicates the Servant Girl Question. For beyond six dollars a week Rafael McGinnis knew he could not go for any treasure. The supper he had so happily hoped to devour cooled in its hamper. The clock ticked. The Queen of Girls cross-examined the Grand Duke. Rafael McGinnis tried to bluster, but nobody minded him. Only one gentleman, a stocky fellow whose wide mouth, neat mutton-chop whiskers, and round, horn-rimmed spectacles gave him a lugubrious resemblance to a worried sculpin, seemed to regard the situation with equal disapproval.

"Oi'll thry th' place, sorr," said Violet presently. She stooped for her carpet-bag, and the mutton-chopped gentleman, unable longer to control himself, dashed his tall hat to the floor in a frenzy of despair and defiance.

"H'I won't 'ave h'it!" he exclaimed vehemently. "We've lived without feemal women, messmites, 'appy an' contented like h'Adams in a garden afore h'Eve were created — cuss 'er! H'if h'it's a choice between me an' a feemal, h'I leaves th' company." And without pausing for his hat, he made a wild rush for the door of the

tap-room. But the lock stopped him. He pulled and kicked crazily until the handsome Dane got him by one arm, the nose-ringed gentleman by the other, and the Grand Duke, picking up his poor, battered, tall hat, set it back on his head with a firmness that smacked of impatience.

"Wot *you'll* do, Mutton Chop," he declared briskly, "be to stand by th' rule o' th' majority. We hires this gal, ole feller, to cook an' wash th' dishes —"

"*Not h'if she knows wot we be!*" cried the other desperately. "Ye drive me to h'it, Whisker. Piruts we be, ma'am, an' not childless widder men h'as 'e's jest been a-tellin' h'of ye. Nor married, h'either. Piruts," he repeated, "h'as comes ashore h'in pooty clo'es h'as we've stole h'off th' backs o' gentlemen passengers h'an' made th' pore cusses walk th' plank h'in their silly h'on-mentionables, h'if ye'll pardon th' word, ma'am —"

The truth was out, and none quicker to recognize it (now that he did recognize it) than Rafael McGinnis. Now he understood those barbaric whiskers, that puzzling nose ring, their amazing ignorance of the Servant Girl Question. He glanced anxiously at the clock, but it was still far from time for the evening traffic of the tap-room to come to his rescue. He stared hopefully at Violet. Wonderful girl! She still smiled like a jack-o'-lantern, and now she was smiling at the wretch with the mutton-chops.

"Ye're a well-manin' wan yerself, sorr," she said gratefully, "pirate or no pirate. An' Oi thank yez fer warrnin' me. But Oi've said Oi'd thry th' place, sorr, an' Oi'm afther thinkin' Oi'll give it a thrial."

On the lonely beach of a tropical island a solitary flamingo, standing comfortably on one leg, curiously watched a solitary pirate moodily pacing back and forth, back and forth. He was a small pirate, simply dressed in a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, a pair of blue trousers, a cutlas, a pistol, a red cotton shirt, and a low-crowned, well-varnished black hat with a pretty ribbon (worn hanging over the left eye) such as was then much affected by seamen. On his left arm he carried a coil of rope, and in his right hand a good-sized bottle on which some unknown apothecary had pasted a friendly warning that it contained a deadly poison. Encumbered as he was, he every now and then raised his hands and tugged despairingly at his small mutton-chop whiskers.

It was still quite early morning, and the bird, the pirate, and an ancient wreck whose cabin still projected from the patient sand that had almost buried it, all cast long shadows toward the woods behind them.

Presently Mutton Chop the Pirate stopped pacing. With an air of finished determination he approached the wreck and disappeared into the cabin. He laid his hat on the table, opened the bottle, and gingerly smelled its fatal contents. Evidently he did not like poison, for he quickly recorked the bottle and stood it carefully on top of his hat. From the cupboard he removed an ancient leather-bound volume, possibly the original log of the doomed vessel, tore out several blank pages of vellum, and placed them methodically by the hat and bottle. Even the flamingo, now watching him through the hatchway, must have seen that he labored under some profound nervous excitement. Finally he sat down at the table, dug a stubby pencil out of his pocket, moistened the lead with his tongue, squared his elbows, and began to write :

Dear Friends and Brave Fell Ohs ! All. *I take my pen in hand to tell you that when you read this I will be no more, but dead as a door nail. This is the end of me. Life is sweet they say but to me it is sour as a pick ill. I told you so. I told you how it would be if you got a girl. When I was young I fled from all girls and bee came a buck can near to S cape from them. We led a wild free life, and who more wild and free than me ? When we took a ship and found girls on her we made them walk the plank and would laugh and shout to see them sink. But when we came home to this isle there was no girl. I see now it was too good to last. Yes, I see now that on earth there is no place where a girl will not come soon her or late her. There is no S cape for me.*

I can kill men as well as the next one, as you all know mess mates but O ! it is gloom he work to kill a man when you are him. Once on a time I had a man pull out my tooth and O ! this will be as if I was that man and me too. I will pull and feel at the same time. I am my own tooth, that is how it will be. But it will soon be done. A good, strong pull and I will be out and at peas.

I can not spell her name but you know who I mean. It is a flour, but she is not. What have I done that this flour should pick me out for what she calls, curse her ! love's young dream ? Where I go she is all ways there and purr sues me with her awe full smile. She gives me a queer look that makes me sick, and she says, Come Mist her Chop and wipe a dish or Come Mist her Chop and need the bread or this or that. And I have to go. I am like a bun he when a snail looks at him with her bright fierce eye. I would kill her if I could but I can not and I do not see why. I can not sleep, or eat, or smoke, or chew, or drink, or joke, or sing, or laugh, or play cards or dice, or dance a horn pipe. And it will get worse and worse.

Last night I could not sleep and could but turn and toss, and thought I will die if this keeps on. An then I said why not die now and have it done with ? It was that way with my tooth, and when it was out and there was no more curse said pain, I said I could not see why I had stood it so long. I am not a cow herd. And so I got up and took my cut lass, my fire arm, some poise on, and a rope to hang with. I could not make up my mind then which I would use so I took them all. I think now that the cut lass will be best. I have heard it does not hurt much to be hung, but how can you be sure ? There is much that we do not know.

Last night when I thought of all this and how I must die to S cape this girl I could curse and swear, but now I am calm. I am like a cloud in the sky, peas full and calm and round and light and with out no arms or legs. It is a queer way to feel, but not bad.

So no more now and fare well from your friend,

LAMB CHOP

It was a long letter. The sun was now considerably higher, but even so the writer seemed loath to finish it. If he was, indeed, as he had just intimated, both a tooth and a dentist, his professional willingness to extract himself doubtless collided with his natural unwillingness to be extracted by anybody. But nothing so nails a desperate resolution to the mast as to commit it to paper. He placed the letter where no one entering the cabin could help seeing it, slapped himself bravely on the chest, drew his cutlas, and began sharpening it with a pocket whetstone.

Over what followed it is as well to pass lightly and quickly. No sensitive reader can *enjoy* the spectacle of a brave but bashful man busily committing suicide. Yet intelligent curiosity, scorning morbid excitement for its

own sake, may wish to know just how he managed it. The facts then, simply but firmly stated as from one student to another, are :

Mutton Chop, as he had himself written, was no cow herd. When the point of the cutlas satisfied him — and that was only when it was as sharp as a needle — he lugged the bench on which he had been sitting to the forward end of the cabin. Here the remains of the ancient mast bisected the bulkhead, and he stood the bench legs out, diagonally against the wall between the mast and the corner.

Then he felt all over his bosom until he located his violently beating heart ; kept the place with his right forefinger ; and juggled the bench up and down with his left hand and right foot until the upper right-hand leg of the bench rested its tip end squarely on his right-hand forefinger nail. So far, so good. He removed his finger. braced the bench solidly ; cut a piece of rope from the coil ; lashed his cruel cutlas, point outward, to the carefully chosen leg, and backed slowly to the other end of the cabin. No dentist was ever calmer. Possibly no tooth was ever more reluctant.

But will to die predominated. With a long, gurgling shriek, the would-be suicide hurled himself at the waiting weapon. It was a short distance to go — but who can say how long it seemed to him going it ? His eyes were closed. His feet went up and down like pistons. His fingers clutched the air as if to stop himself, and then bravely let go of it. He crossed the cabin. He missed the cutlas. Not without practice can any man run straight with his eyes shut. He spread himself, like a human pancake, on the solid bulkhead. It hurt, but it was not fatal.

Some men would have been discouraged, but not this

one. He unspreed himself, breathed deeply, picked up the rope, and turned his eyes to the ceiling. Once more he was all dentist. There was one hook in the ceiling directly over the table, and he began hauling the time-worn piece of furniture out from under it.

Presently he stood on the edge of the table, now also the edge of eternity. Briefly and baldly, Mutton Chop slipped the noose round his neck, adjusted the knot deftly behind his left ear, gently tightened the rope, and made it fast in good seamanlike fashion to the hook. Then he did the following things quickly, one after the other : He closed his eyes. He clasped his hands. He smiled peacefully. He jumped off the table.

The rope tightened.

The hook broke.

He sat down on the floor.

Any fool, as he had just grimly told himself, can jump off a table ; but it takes an unusual fool to sit down on the floor from the same altitude. Disappointment and the floor hit him together — and with the quick, impulsive rage of this second mortifying failure he did the following things, one after another : (1) He drew his pistol. (2) He pointed it at his head. (3) He pulled the trigger.

In that confined space, the pistol went off like a cannon. Smoke filled the cabin ; the startled flamingo fluttered away from his post of observation, and was out of sight far down the beach before he had stopped running. Nothing is quicker than human impulse, and this time Mutton Chop would surely have done it if two impulses, both perfectly natural, hadn't got hold of him at exactly the same instant. "Shoot !" cried one. "Duck !" cried the other ; and the deadly bullet, no head intercepting it, knocked the poison bottle into a thousand useless

fragments. He might, to be sure, have committed suicide by eating these fragments, but the thought never occurred to him. The smoke floated up through the hatchway, and presently Mutton Chop put on his hat and slowly followed.

The sea rippled gently on the long beach : the tired pirate sat down on the wreck and stared at it with mournful indifference. What was so much water good for, anyway ? he asked himself bitterly — and then, suddenly, he jumped to his feet with a grim expression of satisfaction. “Th’ sea ! Th’ sea !” he muttered in a kind of ecstasy, and walked straight into it. The beach was wide and shoal, but step by step he advanced sturdily toward the far horizon — ankle-deep ; knee-deep ; waist-deep ; chin-deep. He made hardly a ripple. Now his mouth vanished, and his neat side-whiskers floated on the broad Atlantic like little bunches of seaweed. At last only his well-varnished hat, with its pretty ribbon, remained visible, bravely advancing seaward — then it stopped moving and floated quietly on the calm blue surface.

But beyond the hat, after perhaps a long quarter of a minute, the ocean was again strangely agitated. The top of a head came slowly out of it ; then the upper part of a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles ; then a pair of mutton-chop whiskers, floating like sea-weed ; and then the chin of the very man who had just disappeared forever. Under his feet, as any quick-minded observer would have guessed immediately, lay an unexpected sandbar — and who could say how far it extended ? With an expression of complete and final discouragement, Mutton Chop turned slowly and started back again.

Presently he passed his pretty hat, but he merely

scowled at it and left it floating, mute testimony to his attempted suicide.

He came ashore soberly, some distance north of the wreck, where the solemn trees hesitated at the edge of the beach like good children whose mothers had told them not to go in swimming. Here was a fine place to dry, and he sat down to do it, luxuriating in the heat of the sun-baked pebbles and curling his wet toes around them appreciatively. Probably the cold bath had shocked the nonsense out of him, for life seemed good and getting better and better every minute.

Come what might, he would never again kill himself. Perhaps, after all, he had been too hasty, too emotional — and now the thing to do was to collect his weapons, destroy his letter, and get sensibly home in time for luncheon. It had been a silly business that he blushed to think of, but it had proved one thing definitely. No man who has (practically) killed himself with a cutlas a rope, a pistol, and an Atlantic ocean — and he would have done it with poison if he hadn't broken the bottle — need fear one female. He got to his feet, folded his arms, and smiled a cold, supercilious, superior smile at an imaginary Violet. Yes, siree! He would go back immediately and —

"Misther Chop!" cried an anxious, affectionate, familiar voice from the woods. "Oh-h-h-, Misther Chop! Ain't yez iver comin' anny more to help woipe th' dishes?"

The sad cry floated thrillingly from the forest; almost it seemed to cross the beach visibly, like some tenuous ghost of sound, and flitter out of sight and hearing toward the horizon. The bright, sunny day swallowed it —

and the dark, mysterious woods swallowed Mutton Chop.

Farther to the south a harsh but happy chorus jarred the woodland silence.

*" His wife an' leetle daughter,
They march above th' water,
And in, kerplunk ! they go.
Ho, boys : ho !
kerplunk ! they go.
Ho ! "*

" An' here we be, Vi'let ! " said Red Whisker cheerfully, as eight pirates and the Queen of Girls came out of the woods together. " Here we be, ole lady, an' I bet ye ten doubloons to a apple dumplin' as we'll find th' cuss a-hidin' of hisself in th' ole cabin."

It was an unusual way for employer to address girl, but from the very beginning Violet had insisted that she was a lady and, inexperienced as they were in social distinctions, they had all taken her word for it.

We must understand Violet, and now, with Mutton Chop speeding back across the island, is as good a time as any. Students of the Servant Girl Question have frequently held that girls have neither conscience nor a sense of humor : that they are, in fact, an ingenious, soulless kind of automaton designed by Providence to do housework, but ruined — and here obviously the Devil gets hold of them — by a distorted ambition to have girls themselves. Violet knew better. She was proud of being a girl ; liked (not unnaturally) to have a person of the opposite sex, preferably the constable on the beat, in her kitchen ; and possessed both humor and conscience, although she allowed neither to interfere with her profession.

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IF VIOLET HAD LOVED MUTTON CHOP, SHE WOULD HAVE
HATED HIM FOR THOSE WORDS

Attracted by the side whiskers of Mutton Chop — for in those days nearly all constables wore them — she had found amusement as well as convenience in making the bashful fellow useful. “Love’s young dream” was pure humor; and the brief, bitter message scrawled that morning with charcoal on her neat bread-board — “good by curse you i go to kill me” — was its natural outcome, uncomplimentary but convincing. If Violet had loved Mutton Chop, she would have hated him for those words and wished him success in his enterprise. As matters stood, they stirred her conscience and set it working in her like yeast in the bread dough.

Not for worlds would she have shown her employers that bread-board — indeed, she cleaned it immediately to make a batch of biscuit; nor did she dare disturb them before breakfast. The meal over, she had persuaded them to take the trail of the runaway. Red, blue, pink, yellow, crimson, old rose, green, and magenta (for they had lately captured a box of the then famous “Dorothy’s Domestic Dyes” and had been having the best of times with it), their shirts now dotted the sand with pretty color as they resumed their chorus, linked arms two and two — Hay-foot! Straw-foot! Hay-foot! Straw-foot! — and marched to the cabin. The girl lagged behind them. Knowing what she knew, prey to remorse, she sat down on the cabin and stared with unseeing eyes in front of her.

Down in the cabin, mute witness of so many near-tragedies, nothing had changed since Mutton Chop left it. Sadness reigned there. It was like coming out of the warm sunshine into a Fine Arts Museum. Instinctively they took off their hats and lowered their voices.

“Wot th’ —— !!! —— !!!!! —— ” whispered the man with the nose-ring.

"Pizen!" whispered Red Whisker, sniffing delicately.

"Eet ees a rope!" whispered a little, nervous, brown man, his earrings shivering. He picked up the rope and dropped it as if it stung him. "Ahh! To see! Zee knot ondair zee ear — bahh! *Sacre!*"

"An' here's a leetle letter from him," whispered Yellow Mustaches. "He is no more," he breathed hoarsely after a moment. "*Dead as a door nail.*" His tone carried conviction. He pulled at his long yellow mustaches recklessly, heedless now how he might take the curl out of them.

"Read it, ole feller," said Red Whisker harshly. "Wot's th' matter of him, dead as a door nail? An' here be we, all th' way across th' island to have a pooty leetle laugh on him. An' him dead as a door nail."

Yellow Mustaches cleared his throat, swallowed twice — the sobbing gulps were the only sound in the cabin — and began reading. Under any circumstances he was a pathetic reader, carefully emphasizing the unimportant words and slurring the important ones. But he read slowly; once you got used to him, he was easy to follow. And this in a way was easy reading. It went straight home to them. Without the fripperies of a conscious art, the simple, sincere, crude effort of a brave but bashful man to explain before killing himself made them for the first time see life through his own horn-rimmed spectacles. And now he was dead as a door nail! Out and at peas! No more pointing good-natured, derisive fingers at him as he stood, gingham apron around his neck, and helped Violet with the dishes. Ah, Pickled Devil-fish! it was too high a price even for a girl like Violet.

"An' where's wot's left on him, pore feller?" said Red Whisker brokenly. "Allus a-tryin' to save th' rest

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HE SEIZED VIOLET BY THE WRIST AND TOOK A SPLASH-
ING STEP SEAWARD. "IN WITH HER, GENTLEMEN
AND MERRY COMPANIONS!"

on us trouble he were, but he can't 'a buried of hisself, 'cos it's agin natur. Under th' table mebbe." And the broken-hearted rascal went down on his hands and knees to look more carefully for his vanished comrade.

Right over their heads, Violet screamed once, twice — a dozen screams tumbling over each other as the eight pirates tumbled up the ladder to see what was the matter with her. No girl, however eaten by remorse, can sit and gaze with unseeing eyes indefinitely. They found her pointing at a neat little pile of sand absently heaped together, patted into a round, pie-like shape, and prettily scalloped about the circumference by the big bare toe of some one who had only recently sat on the cabin.

A pathetic sand-pie — for who but Mutton Chop could have made it? — and on either side of it the deep impression of a large bare foot as the sitter had jumped up decisively. Beyond the sand-pie one large footprint trudged bravely after the other straight toward the ocean. It was a plain track, and they all followed it together in an awed silence. Only when the ocean rippled at their feet did they dare raise their eyes and see, far off, a round, well-varnished little hat floating disconsolately on that tranquil surface.

"Buried of hisself he did, arter all," said Red Whisker wonderingly. "Crazy as a loon he were, pore feller — an' here's th' feemale gal as drove him to it!" He seized Violet by the wrist and took a splashing step seaward. "In with her, gen'lemen all an' merry companions!" They caught his meaning, looked again at the hat, and gritted their teeth with horrid, revengeful unanimity. Three of them got her by each arm, two pushed behind, and the terrified shriek of the surprised girl lost itself in the rude and brutal chorus :

*"Ho, boys : ho !
And in, kerplunk ! they go.
kerplunk !
Ho !"*

It was a wide, shoal beach, as Mutton Chop had discovered. Again and again Violet dug her two little heels into the sand and stopped so suddenly that they all went in a heap together. It was a good deal like an old-fashioned game of football — three yards to gain — 4 — 11 — 17 — Rah ! Rah ! Rah ! — DOWN ! Eventually they were up to their middles and stopped to take breath before the next rush.

"Messmates," said Yellow Mustaches suddenly, as if the thought had just struck him, "cookin' an' washin' of th' dishes ourselves ain' a-goin' to bring pore ole Mutton Chop back to us."

"No more it ain't," agreed Red Whisker.

"Mebbe we'd better spare her cussed life, arter all, say I, an' break her in to do pore ole Mutton's work aboard ship."

It was a fair, sweet morning, a week since Mutton Chop had vanished forever, and from the deck of an unarmed and fleeing Indiaman Captain Isaac Turner keenly studied a small, rakish-looking schooner rapidly overhauling him. Of the schooner's purpose there was no doubt whatever. The Jolly Roger flaunted at her mast-head ; the wind rippled it, and the fleshless jaws seemed visibly chewing the cud of anticipation.

Amidships, as his glass showed him, seven of the vile but able wretches sat round a rum hogshead, gloriously drinking rum and eating doughnuts. A short, stout

pirate, whose bright blue trousers were much too narrow for comfort, served them industriously — now rushing a silver pitcher from hogshead to empty cannikin ; anon rushing stout legs in tight trousers off to the galley for a fresh plate of doughnuts. What puzzled the captain was the evident fear and anxiety that impelled these extremities.

Beside the hogshead, embracing it affectionately, a lanky devil-may-care rascal raised his voice villainously, and the same sweet wind that waved his long yellow mustaches wafted the ditty to the ears of the captain :

“ ‘ Hop down, hop down,
Oh, Eyes of Brown,
Hop down from off my knees.
Lift up,’ he said,
‘ Your golden head
From off my shoulder, please.
It’s up sails all !
Th’ fore ro-yal
We sets afore th’ breeze.

“ ‘ A kiss ! A kiss !
My pooty miss !’
He kissed her ten times three
Who ne’er, he swore,
Kissed gal afore.
‘ I’m off to scourge th’ sea.
From surge to surge
I could not scourge
With you upon my knee.

“ ‘ A hug ! A hug !’
And, mug to mug,

*He clasped her to his chest.
And heaved a sigh,
And piped his eye,
And thus th' gal address :
' Farewell,' he cried,
' My Joy ! My Pride !'
And fled like one possesst."*

Captain Isaac Turner gloomed over his long white whiskers at his first mate. "It's 'The Pirate's Farewell, to his True Love' all right," he said grimly, "though it's many long years since I've heard it sung. Lay us aboard they will, sir, if we don't circumvent 'em — an' then it's plank, fire, and another good ship missing. Can you scream, Mr. Smith ?"

Worried as he was, and fairly so aboard that defenseless vessel, Mr. Smith smiled at the question. But discipline is discipline. He screamed obediently — a strange noise — for it was the first time the brave fellow had screamed since infancy — but with plenty of volume. Watching through his glass, Captain Turner saw the blood-thirsty ruffians on the schooner rub their hands cheerfully.

"Good !" he exclaimed. "Scream again, Mr. Smith, lively now — and then call all hands aft. I've something to say to 'em." He studied the effect of the second scream and was surprised to see the fat little pirate who had been serving the others drop a plate of doughnuts and dive like a startled rabbit into the hold of the schooner.

Aboard the *Tender Polly* nobody noticed this cowardly disappearance. Red Whisker, leaning on the hogshead, was making an oration.

"Gen'lemen all an' merry comp'nions," he was saying dogmatically, "I'm a fire-eater an' you're a fire-eater, an'

we're all fire-eaters, cuss us! [Hear! Hear!] Blow high, blow low, we scourge th' sea, an' it's true's gospel, as th' song says, that ye can't scourge th' sea an' hold a pooty leetle gal on yer knee at th' same time. Ef ye could 'twould be a cussed fool way to go scourgin'. [Laughter and applause.] We laffs at love 'cos *we're* beasts. *I'm* beast, *you're* beast, *all* beasts — *an' proud on it!* [Great applause.] Best beast I ever knowed, gen'lemen, were a beast named Mutton Chop — a bloody-minded, good-hearted beast, an' now he's dead as a door nail. Gen'lemen, *excuse* tears. [Cries of 'Don't blame ye. All feel same way, Whisker.'] An' now, this being scourgin' day, run out th' forrard gun, gen'lemen, an' drop a round shot jest afore th' nose o' yon pore Injyman."

During this fine speech the wicked schooner passed to windward of her quarry. The forward gun boomed ominously. Across the water a dozen wild screams, in which Mr. Smith predominated, answered it pitifully as the Indiaman hove to and lowered her colors. A cowardly vessel. They saw the captain wringing his hands helplessly on the quarterdeck, the mate wringing his hands helplessly amidships, the crew wringing their hands helplessly on the forecastle, and a little group of lady and gentlemen passengers wringing their hands helplessly in front of the cabin. Then, almost as if they were rehearsing a grand opera, they all howled together, waved their hands despairingly aloft, sank on their knees, and extended trembling arms imploringly toward the disgusted pirate. A monotonous chant emanated from them :

"Spare us ! Spare us ! Spare us ! Spare us !

Mis-ter Pirate ! Mis-ter Pirate !

Mercy ! Mercy ! —— "

"A lily-livered lot ef ever I see one, gen'lemen," ex-

claimed Red Whisker contemptuously. "Wot I hoped for were a pooty fight, vessel to vessel, an' now all we got to do be to lower away a boat an' massacre 'em like pickin' dandelions." A moment later the *Tender Polly* lay head to wind, and her long-boat, laden with pirates, pulled toward the screaming merchantman.

At about that moment, down in the hold of the abominable vessel, Mutton Chop stirred in his sleep. How he got there will hardly puzzle the perspicacious reader. Failing to leave the island as a disembodied spirit, his only chance was the schooner, always partly provisioned and ready, capricious as pirates often are, to start scourging at a day's notice. He had swum out, climbed aboard, and made himself a snug hiding-place in the hold. Farther than that his plans were indefinite. He would leave the *Polly* at the first opportunity and perhaps ship on some other vessel starting on a long, girlless voyage.

In two days the *Polly* had weighed anchor, and his ears told him that his fierce former companions, contrary to custom, had brought Violet with them. He stuck tight in the hold, foraged and got a bit of exercise on deck at night, and slept in the daytime. Now as he slowly awakened he knew by the motion of the schooner that she was hove to, and guessed the reason.

Mutton Chop turned over and peered between the barrels that hid his nesting place. The hatchway was open, and he nearly betrayed himself by an oath of astonishment. Some one, whom he had never seen before, stood on the ladder and looked out of the hatch. The position hid the upper half of this person's body, but Mutton Chop was nevertheless certain that the man was a stranger, for never before had he seen any man whose weight was so strangely distributed.

It seemed, so to speak, to have settled slowly, leaving

him a comparatively small waist and then expanding him in a balloon-like way that tapered to the tiptoes on which he was standing. Tie a string around his ankle, lift his toes suddenly off the ladder, and he would very likely float up in the air and be a pretty thing for children to play with. And *this*, thought Mutton Chop, was what they had got to take *his* place in their jolly company, although where or how they had found it he could not imagine. Indignation got the better of him.

"Hi!" he shouted angrily, and climbed over the barrels.

The stranger heard him. He scuttled up the ladder — and Mutton Chop after him; fled in panic along the star-board side of the vessel, rounded the foremast, dodged under the jib, and away aft again. He was a short fellow, made apparently in two sections, for above the waist he widened as remarkably as he widened below it. Except for his head, picturesquely turbaned by his piratical kerchief, you might have stood him up (thought Mutton Chop) on one end as easily as the other. And he had no wind whatever. His savage pursuer had the little duffer by the collar before they were amidships, swung him round, and dropped him instantly like a hot potato.

"Misther Chop!" cried one.

"Vi'let!" cried the other.

Gradually their expressions became human. Happy Violet! No unintentional murderess, she could now discard these unwomanly, ungirlish, disfiguring garments and once more stay happily at home in her kitchen while her employers were away on business.

And to Mutton Chop also the moment was an emotional revelation. A girl in trousers! A girl in — He sat down on the deck and laughed till the tears came. Who could ever be scared of a girl in trousers? He held

his sides. He waved his feet in the air, rocking hysterically from side to side on what was now his center of gravity. Oh, this *would* kill him ; and the indignation of Violet made it funnier and funnier. A girl in — Oh, dear ! Oh, dear ! Oh, dear ! Had he known anything about suffragettes, he would have hurled the word at her between spasms. He found another.

“ Oh, you leetle *man*, you ! ” he gurgled, and rolled on his back where he lay feebly thumping the deck with heels and knuckles.

There is one thing that no girl can or will endure, and that is to be laughed at. She will leave immediately and without notice. Violet looked about wildly and saw the Indiaman under full sail and bearing down rapidly on the motionless schooner. In the port bow, the wind waved the long, white whiskers of Captain Turner like a flag of defiance. No longer helplessly wringing his hands, he firmly grasped a long pole with a keen-edged knife lashed to the end of it. And behind his vessel the pirate long-boat had turned like a surprised and disappointed serpent. Spray hid them. The anxious miscreants pulled through a shower bath as they tried, desperately but in vain, to beat the captain to their own schooner.

You see now what Captain Turner had been after, why he had asked Mr. Smith to scream, the real meaning of that unbelievable display of cowardice. A resourceful old seadog ! The Indiaman coasted along the side of the schooner ; the long pole reached from deck to deck ; the keen-edged knife slit the jib, slit the foresail, slit the mainsail, came within a horrid ace of slitting the Queen of Girls. Instinctively she grabbed the pole, and before she could let go of it disappeared over the taffrail into the ocean. A moment later Captain Isaac Turner dragged her aboard his own vessel — and it had all happened so quickly that



"OH, YOU LEETLE MAN, YOU!" HE GURGLLED, AND
ROLLED ON HIS BACK

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Mutton Chop still lay on the deck thumping it hilariously.

So his surprised companions found him as they climbed back, sober enough now, aboard the disabled *Polly*. Already the Indiaman was out of gunshot. They surrounded Mutton Chop, stood him up, patted him on the back, and shook him excitedly. Hysteria slowly relinquished him. He took off his spectacles, wiped his eyes, put them on again, and looked hopefully from one side to another.

"W-where's Vi'let?" he articulated feebly. "H'it may kill me yet, messmites, but H'i w-w-wants another look h'at 'er!"

FANNIE

IT was a lazy, sultry February noon in the early 1830's, and on the deck of a small, rakish-looking schooner, idly pursuing her way eastward across the Atlantic as if she considered the thirtieth parallel of north latitude an imaginary tight-rope, seven able-bodied pirates sat in a row against the starboard bulwarks. The angle of the deck elevated their seventy bare, brown toes to a somewhat higher level than their evil but contented faces ; and as they all smoked long, black cigars, the effect was not unlike that of the same number of God-fearing gentlemen gathered in some congenial parlor with their feet on the mantelpiece.

The wind held steady, and directly above them a great, maternal white cloud floated so low that an imaginative author might have thought it in danger of being spiked on the foremast. Now and then the red-whiskered fellow at the wheel gave her a couple of spokes for the mere frivolous pleasure of unsettling his companions. But for the most part, the seven cheerful pirates gazed solemnly upward, their shifty eyes steadied by the hypnotic motion of the bare, brown back of the lookout as he swung in the crow's nest. There were no ladies aboard the *Tender Polly*, and the nine pirates were all bare-backed as well as barefooted. Indeed, the desperate fellows had spent part of the fine drying morning neatly washing their shirts, which now fluttered, with a kind of damp picturesqueness, from a clothesline amidships.

"Now *there's* a tattoo, messmates," said one of them presently — a tall, graceful fellow whose long, handsome yellow mustaches now and then tickled his broad chest and made him wriggle all over — "*there's* a tattoo, say I, as any seaman might be proud to have on him." He jerked his thumb upward toward the man in the crow's-nest. "What I likes about it be th' neat an' gentlemanly idee o' givin' th' Wenus a banjo to play on. That's what I calls originality."

"Mebbe ye do, Yaller Mustaches; an' that's just what ole Apple Jack thought when he paid th' feller to let him have it copied on his own eppy-dermis." The man at the wheel carefully inserted the stem of a short clay pipe into what was presumably a mouth, somewhere under his red whiskers, and accomplished the miracle of lighting it from the stub of his cigar without singeing them. "But what's th' use o' havin' a tattoo mark where ye can't see it? Th' small o' a man's back ain't no place for tattoo. Ye can't injie it yerself, for one thing — an' nobody else can't injie it either, except when ye're a-washin' of yer shirt or a-goin' in swimmin'."

"That's what I likes about it, Whisker," said the other. "It's so maiden modest!"

He fell silent, playing absently with his long, yellow mustaches, and just at the right of him a stout, bald-headed pirate partly closed his eyes and squinted up at the lookout's back with an air of critical consideration.

"Must have been even pootier in th' original," he remarked thoughtfully. "Tracin' of a de-sign on iled paper an' then workin' through it with a cuttlefish bone kinder smears th' colors like. What *I'm* goin' to do some day," he added irrelevantly, "is to have hair tattooed on my head. I've thought of it often. Not so much for looks,

mind ye, as 'cause some time it might keep me from havin' a sunstroke."

The man at the wheel smoked for perhaps a minute.

"*You* couldn't have no sunstroke, Baldy," he said bluntly. "Sunstroke, as I onderstand it, is like burnin' up th' tobacker in this leetle pipe o' mine. Tain't th' pipe as burns up ; it's somethin' inside th' pipe. An' ye can't tattoo hair, anyway. It won't stick."

"Not real hair," explained the baldheaded pirate simply. "A pictur' o' hair, parted on one side mebbe, and kind o' scalloped-like —" and he lost himself in a reverie that readers even slightly bald will immediately appreciate.

Meantime the wicked schooner held her way steadily along the thirtieth parallel, and against the fleecy bosom of the maternal white cloud the tattooed back of the lookout swung peacefully in the crow's-nest. A villainous-looking fellow at the end of the row tried to balance his cigar on the inner circumference of his brass nose-ring ; and, having found he could do it, decided that conversation was more interesting.

"Jack's a modest feller, dressed or undressed," he remarked casually. "Allus a-subordinatin' of himself to the part, as he calls it — an' sorter livin' up to a tattoo mark where he can't see it, same's th' parsons tells us we ought to live up to our bloomin' souls. But what's the use, say I, of a soul as ye can't take out, now an' then, an' make sure ye've still got it ?"

It was an unexpected question, such as often pops out in general conversation, but the implied argument evidently interested none of his hearers. Nobody answered ; and presently a song came floating down from the crow's-nest, and they all cleared their throats and prepared to join in the chorus.

*"When a pirut is feeloniously scannin'
The horizon for a likely-lookin' craft,
With his wicked brain industriously plannin'
How to drive th' helpless crew with horror daft,
He should keep in mind th' fundymental notion
That he isn't merely out upon a toot,
But to profit both in pocket and emotion.
So-o-oo! —
It's allus wise to look before ye loot."*

It was a pretty melody ; on the deck below, fourteen bare heels beat a vigorous accompaniment as the listeners took up the chorus :

*"You may chase a ship all day,
And when she is brought to bay,
Find her full o' oats an' hay.
O-o-o-oh!
It's allus wise to look before ye loot."*

"Happy as a pipin' skylark, too," said the man they called Baldy. He had come out of his reverie to join in the chorus. "Allus like that is Apple Jack when it's his turn to go aboard th' next vessel we sights an' find out whether she's worth takin'."

"Likes th' excitement of it," explained his yellow-mustached companion carelessly, "to say nothin' o' th' fun he gets dressin' of hisself up like a cussed missionary. He's a cuss for play actin'. Remember how that load o' missionaries looked when they walked th' plank?" he added, with a twinkle of reminiscent enjoyment.

"All in their silly flannel onderwears," said the man with the nose-ring — and they all chuckled together in a hideous kind of harmony. The lookout was again caroling :

*"There be goodly ships as carry loads o' money,
Or a useful lot o' lickkers an' segars ;
Lady passengers as timid as a bunny —"*

His song stopped abruptly ; and his voice, no longer musical, came bellowing down to them in a tone that meant business.

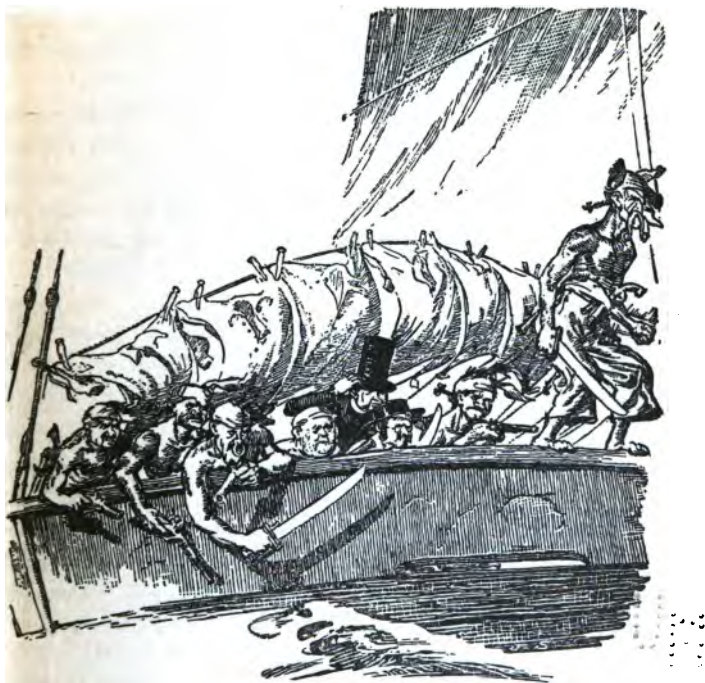
"Sail-ho !" he shouted ; and instinctively the seven leaped to their feet, threw their cigars overboard, and started to roll up their sleeves — a foolish movement, for their sleeves all hung drying amidships. A new voice, the voice of authority, spurted through the red whiskers of the burly helmsman.

"All hands to work ship !" he cried gayly, and, as his wretched but able crew sprang to their places, "Where away, Apple Jack ?"

"Due east, Whisker," replied the lookout. "Bearin' about sou'west. Freight an' lady passengers by th' look of her." Limited as he was in space, the delighted rascal executed the first steps of "The Sailor's Hornpipe" and nearly went overboard as the *Tender Polly* altered her course beneath him. A moment later every sail she could carry bellied above her deck, and the seven cigars the pirates had thrown overboard floated together nearly a quarter of a mile behind her.

But Red Whisker, the Pirate, was not yet satisfied. "Brace back th' wash !" he shouted — and the nine shirts amidships also bellied before the wind and added their helpful mite to the speed of the vessel. The *Tender Polly* ripped the Atlantic with the incisive determination of a golden-haired saleslady ripping a yard of cotton.

In the cabin of the *Frozen Mary*, laden with ice from Boston to Valparaiso, Captain Nathan Gill sat at checkers



THE NINE SHIRTS AMIDSHIPS ALSO BELLIED BEFORE
THE WIND AND ADDED THEIR HELPFUL MITE TO
THE SPEED OF THE VESSEL

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with his first mate. It was the only bond that really united them, and the light winds of the past week, now happily exchanged for a lively breeze, had strained it almost to breaking. At least Captain Gill's end of it. Mate Hoskins, had he been of another sex, would doubtless have confessed a willingness to die playing checkers and, once provided with this innocent recreation, no calm could unsettle him. Captain Nathan was different. Tough as a knot, and carrying his seventy years with the strength and agility of a youth of forty, he still retained the hasty disposition that at fourteen had led him to whip his father simply because he got tired of being whipped by him.

"Seventy year old, Mr. Hoskins," the captain was saying, and he glowered from under bushy eyebrows at his glass of grog before taking a moody sip from it, "and I give you my word as an honest seaman that I feel as if I'd spent sixty of 'em right here in this cabin playing checkers with you. I'm a patient man, Mr. Hoskins, and I'll soon be an old one. But God bless my soul, sir! if before I lose my faculties I wouldn't like to do something just a shade more exciting!"

"*More* exciting?" said the mate doubtfully. The captain glared at him, but his subordinate was evidently perfectly serious.

"What I mean, Mr. Hoskins," he continued, with a savage kind of mildness, "is something, as I might say, a bit more pheelsical. I don't say that it isn't a distinguished duty to carry this first and epoch-making cargo of ice — which is going to melt before we make Valparaiso, sir, or I'm no prophet — to the teeming population of South America, cursed as they are, sir, with hell for a climate and no ice of their own making. But as for excitement, sir, this voyage reminds me of eating a cold

doughnut on a full stomach. And what is there exciting about *that*? — I ask you.”

“What, indeed?” said Mr. Hoskins politely. “It’s your move, Captain.” And the captain advanced a checker with the determined enjoyment of a condemned murderer eating his last hot biscuit.

“When I was younger,” he went on, half to himself, “and afore I’d worked up to second officer, we got rid of a lot of time in the fo’castle tattooing each other. Talk about your pictures on canvas, Mr. Hoskins; I don’t say they ain’t smart; but it must be dull work painting ’em to anybody who has ever worked on a living being. That’s art! My own designs,” he added modestly, “were all what you might call thoughtful and original. The best I ever did was a little thing I tattooed on Fannie.”

“Fannie!” exclaimed Mr. Hoskins. The pretty feminine name evidently both shocked and interested him.

“Fannie Gill, sir,” said the captain brusquely.

“Wife, sir?” asked the mate cautiously.

“Brother, sir,” roared the captain. “Francis W. ! Gone ! Vanished ! Swallowed up ! Thirty years ago !” He reached out a big hand to his glass of grog and raised it to his lips thirstily. A moment later it, too, was swallowed up, and the captain seemed to feel better. “The greatest shock I ever experienced, sir,” he explained more calmly. “We called him Fannie to tease him, and the little chap ran away and was never heard of afterward.” He advanced a checker and they made several moves in silence.

“That tattoo mark, sir,” continued Captain Gill presently, “was a Venus sitting on a rock, playing a banjo. Not exactly the proper design for a young lad like Fannie. But I put it in the small of his back where he couldn’t see it.” The old man thought a moment and then re-

garded his mate with an air of suddenly awakened interest.

"You ever been tattooed, Mr. Hoskins?"

The mate turned pale under his sea tan, and then blushed vividly. He saw the captain's meaning, and consternation drove him to a tremendous fabrication.

"M-m-me?" he stammered. "Oh, yes. Thoroughly! Not on my hands and face, of course; but otherwise I'm tattooed all over. It's your move, Captain."

"How many marks?" asked the captain cheerfully, making no motion to renew his checkers.

"Marks?" said the mate doubtfully. "Deportment when I went to school?"

"D—— deportment when you went to school! Tattoo."

"Oh, t-t-tattoo." Mr. Hoskins attempted an air of nonchalance, but he got up hastily. "I never counted 'em. There's too many."

"We'll count 'em now, sir," cried the captain, and slapped his knee heartily. "'Twill help pass a long afternoon, Mr. Hoskins, and if so happen that we find a vacant inch or two, I've got the old cuttlefish bone and some ink right here in my locker."

Unhappy Mr. Hoskins! Gladly would he have been tattooed all over (could it have been done several years ago) to escape this moment. The wild idea came to him of rushing to his stateroom, locking the door, and rapidly tattooing himself with his own writing ink — but he remembered in time that he had just used the last of it on his daily journal. Tattooed or a liar! — and the captain was already opening his locker.

"Schooner in distress, Cap'n," cried a voice down the companionway, "overhaulin' us off th' stabbord quarter." It turned the captain from the locker and set him climbing the companion ladder with the mate behind him.

She was a small, rakish-looking schooner, her deck

empty except for a solitary figure at the wheel, and her signals of distress fluttering almost gayly as she raced toward them. But even had this helmsman been one of a large company, he would have attracted the attention of any thoughtful observer. Seen through the glass, he was a husky, broad-shouldered fellow, tightly buttoned up in a long, black frock coat many sizes too small for him. Above this coat his tanned, weather-beaten, mildly humorous face, to which a touch of russet had perhaps been added by the tightness of his white choker, was round, smooth, and shining, with a long, white scar that gave him, at this distance, somewhat the look of a cheerful but determined baked apple recently converted at a religious revival. Dressed like a missionary, thought the captain, and an uncommonly edible one to look at ; but his tall, black hat was worn at an angle too gallant for even the most light-hearted of that self-immolating profession — and the skill with which he handled the vessel smacked to Captain Nathan of a lifelong training.

Meantime the *Frozen Mary* lay to and waited, pitching and tossing, and the distressed schooner drew steadily nearer until she, too, came up into the wind at a little distance. A couple of seamen came on deck to assist the helmsman. They moved slowly, as if just recovering from a long illness, but between them they managed to get a small boat overboard, and the man in the tall hat was soon pulling lustily toward the bark. In perhaps ten minutes he was standing on the deck of the *Mary*. Seen thus near at hand, he might still have given an imaginative observer the same epicurean impression as at a distance, for his nose was negligible and his beady black eyes were not unlike a couple of cloves artfully added to improve his flavor.

“Glad to see you looking so hearty, sir,” said Captain Gill. Suspicion was in his heart and his hand in his

pocket. Now the hand came out with a fat, honest-appearing plug of tobacco, and as the captain bit slowly and luxuriously into it, he closely watched his visitor's expression. Quickly as the reverend gentleman rolled his beady eyes heavenward, Captain Nathan caught the longing glance they had cast at his plug of tobacco ; he made a hospitable motion with it that was equivalent to an invitation.

"Filthy weed !". said the other solemnly. "Filthy, filthy weed ! If th' Lord had wanted th' Reverend Simon V. Jones to chew, he'd a-given him a cud like a cow to chew on. But I ain't saying," he added quickly, "as he mightn't like me to try a leetle o' it just so's to know what I'm a-talkin' of when I warns th' heathen." He accepted the plug, took a generous experimental bite, and spat skillfully to leeward. "And what I needs *now*," he added contentedly, "is a little expert opinion in a matter o' sickness."

"Better lie down," said the captain.

The Reverend Simon chuckled as if the remark struck him as extraordinarily funny.

"Not yer humble," he replied easily. "Good tobacco never hurt nobody yet as were chewin' in th' Lord's service. It's them poor fellers on th' *Mary J. Smith*, Cap'n" — and he waved his tall hat with an inclusive gesture toward the distressed schooner.

"Sick ?" asked the captain.

"Surprisin'. Heathen, sir, especially infant heathen, I knows what to do with, them bein' my spechulty, in a way o' speakin'. But seafarin' men ain't only half heathen ; an' what's struck th' cap'n, mate, crew, an' passengers o' that cussed vessel is a sight more than this child o' grace can put his finger on to. Everybody sick but th' pore missionary. And here be I," he added

craftily, "holdin' up a vessel as very likely has a vallyble cargo below hatches an' —"

Captain Nathan grunted ; he had expected some such question.

"*Very*, Mr. Jones," he replied dryly.

The Reverend Simon looked at once relieved and delighted, but he immediately concealed his feelings under an air of humble entreaty.

"It won't take ye but a few minutes, Cap'n," he went on anxiously, "an' all I axes of ye is to come aboard with me an' look 'em over."

Captain Gill nodded and turned to his mate. "Mr. Hoskins," he said sharply, "overhaul the cabin for a little book entitled 'The One Thousand and One Symptoms, or Every Sea Captain His Own Doctor.' I'll take it with me. And afore you go, have a couple of the men throw off the cargo hatch. Maybe this gentleman would like to take a peek at the cargo."

Gayly and gladly the Reverend Simon followed the kind-hearted captain toward the cargo hatch, and each smiled as he went, although for quite different reasons. The hatch had been opened when they got there. Fifteen feet or more below deck level the surface of the ice glittered where the sun struck it, and then faded away into mysterious shadows. It had been packed carelessly, and a ridge of ice ran along the center of the vessel, over which little hillocks of sawdust chased each other as the bark pitched and tossed. In those days there could hardly have been a more surprising cargo for any visitor to examine ; but the Reverend Simon, hardly able to believe his eyes, bent nearly double in his effort to detect something more interesting.

"Ice !" he exclaimed bitterly. "Just ice ! Nothin' but ice ! An' what's it good for, anyway ?" If he has

before been likened to an apple, there was that in his tone which suggested he had become a sour one.

"To keep pirates on!" roared the captain — and spanked his visitor. Forward and over toward the ice went the hypocritical pirate, and with such acrobatic vehemence that he nearly turned a complete somersault. He turned so far, indeed, that his strong hand, seeking frantically for any available support, caught the very ankle of his unexpected assailant. For a single instant Captain Gill stood on one leg, the other stiffly extended, with the Reverend Simon dangling from its farthest extremity. Then the firm leg tottered. Ankle in hand they disappeared together, and as they hit the ice a delicate wooden cloud of sawdust almost concealed their splendid figures from the faces already peering anxiously after them. The shock loosened the pirate's hold ; the ridge of ice separated them ; and they slid rapidly and unwillingly apart, the one to port and the other to starboard. Each brought up sitting and glared wildly about in search of the other.

The sawdust settled ; and from the edge of the hatch hung what appeared to be a number of bodiless heads, upside down and moving excitedly as the mate and crew leaned over to see what had become of their impetuous captain. Soon the deck of the *Frozen Mary* looked as empty as that of the distressed schooner, except that the cargo hatch seemed to be surrounded by headless bodies. Above this grewsome spectacle the sails swung idly.

Even the hold was silent. Supreme anger is fortunately inarticulate. Seated as they were to port and starboard, the captain and the Reverend Simon shook their fists at each other and looked exactly like a couple of deaf mutes, pitifully anxious to communicate but unable to calm them-

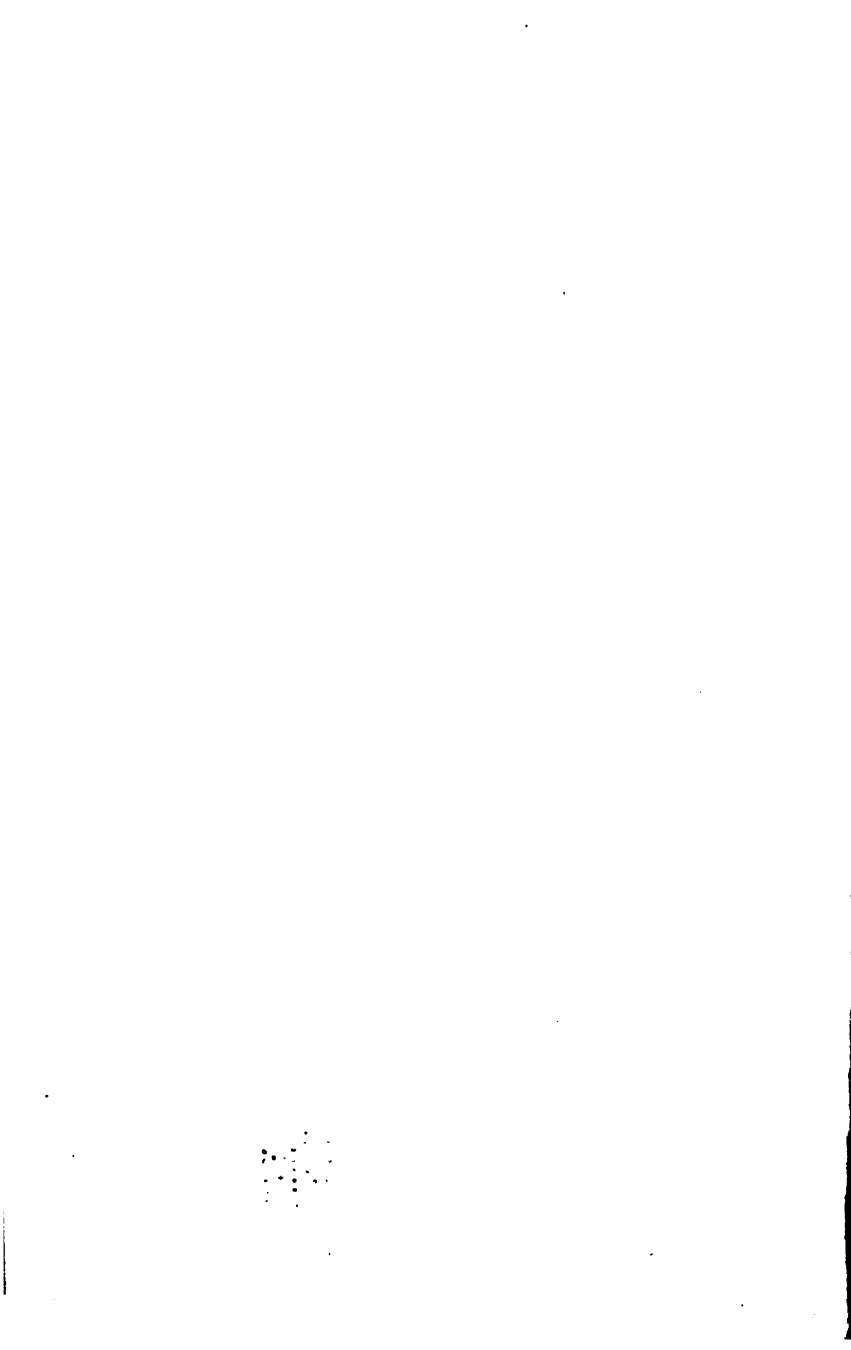
selves sufficiently to remember their graceful deaf-and-dumb alphabet. Could a glance have killed, the captain's eye would have annihilated the pirate ; and the pirate met it with just such a grimace as a brave baked apple might bestow on the cook who proposed to warm him over for supper.

Then a wave struck the *Frozen Mary*, and she ducked so merrily to port and bobbed so cheerily back to starboard that each lost his mooring and coasted gayly — such, at least, was the absurd effect of their easy postures — up over the summit of the ridge of ice and down the other side of it. There was nothing to be gained by this change of position. They both knew it, but love, hate, and the force of gravity are equally irresistible. Then they recovered their tongues, and the long, smooth dashes that they left in the sawdust needed only exclamation points to represent what they found to say to each other. Around the hatch the row of apparently bodiless heads exchanged glances of involuntary horror. Hardened as they were, they half expected to find that Captain Nathan and the Reverend Simon had vanished in an odor of brimstone.

But they were still there, and soon only their frantic efforts to slide into and kill each other kept the spectacle from becoming monotonous. Now you saw them, and now you didn't. The hold performed variously, and as minute slid relentlessly after minute without catching it, so the captain slid relentlessly after the pirate, and the pirate after the captain. Then the Reverend Simon, muttering vindictively to himself, managed to grasp a horizontal stringer between thumb and fingers and got unsteadily on his feet. Across the hold Captain Nathan grimly imitated him. Alternately the motion of the vessel waved them horizontally from their stringers ; and if they had previously shaken their fists at each other, they now



EACH COASTED GAILY—UP OVER THE SUMMIT OF THE
RIDGE OF ICE AND DOWN THE OTHER SIDE



shook their feet with equal bitterness. And the hatch realized that each was waiting for just the angle that would coast him straight at his adversary.

Presently the *Frozen Mary* rolled steadily and slowly to starboard, and the Reverend Simon launched himself savagely from his support, landed with a vindictive spank in the old, easy, informal attitude, and slid toward the captain. Straight he came as a seated arrow, his feet together and his mouth open. He topped the ridge, and Captain Nathan, also muttering vindictively, let go his stringer and prepared to receive him.

Again the *Frozen Mary* pitched lazily forward and then rolled idly back to port. The Reverend Simon bumped solemnly just athwart the beam on the starboard side, coasted back almost to the summit of the ridge, and then settled, with another solemn bump, at exactly the spot for which he had started. But the same careless gyration had sent the captain spinning up and over the ridge and whacked him soundly against the opposite timbers. On the ridge between them the tall, black hat of the missionary poised like some bird of evil omen and then scuttled coquettishly toward the bareheaded captain.

In calmer moments Captain Gill had been heard to say that he never felt quite himself without his cap. He reached out instinctively, gathered in the tall hat, and settled it firmly over his own cranium. The hatch giggled. But the Reverend Simon evidently took the simple act as an additional insult.

"You take off my hat, Mr. Man," he bellowed indignantly — and trimmed the bellow all round the edges with words so fortunately unintelligible to gentle readers that it would be worse than foolish to repeat them.

"I've stud a lot from ye already," he added threateningly, "but when it comes to *you* wearin' of my hat —"

But now that he had something on his head, Captain Gill's mind worked more clearly. Often in youth had he coasted down-hill in the manner graphically described as "belly bump." He had never tried it without a sled — but the thing might be possible !

Spurred by a new hope, the undaunted old man set himself to make it a reality. He scraped away at the ice with the toe of his shoe until he had made a niche deep enough to afford a secure anchorage. He worked and waved alternately. But the hole was at last finished. He hooked his toes into it and cautiously extended himself on the ice toward the Reverend Simon. His broad, flat hands held him with a precarious steadiness, and his knees were bent like a frog's to supply additional momentum. The Reverend Simon, unable to see him over the ridge, wondered uneasily what had become of him. They were exactly opposite ; but gyration followed gyration in uncomfortable silence before the determined captain felt the vessel coming up under him at a true right angle.

"Here's your hat, you sheep in wolf's clothing !" he shouted, with such bitter sarcasm that it was only some weeks afterward that he realized how he had twisted the quotation. His bent legs straightened with a snap — and an instant later the Reverend Simon beheld the remarkable spectacle of his own tall hat crossing the ridge as if shot from a cannon. It was coming straight at him, and the captain behind it.

But even as he crossed the ridge Captain Gill realized, with a sickening sense of disappointment, that it is one thing to belly-bump on a sled and quite another to accomplish the same graceful flight unsupported. You simply can't steer yourself in that position — and that was the trouble with it. Already he knew not whither he was going ; his toes drummed foolishly and indignantly

on the ice in the useless effort to control his direction ; as seen from the hatch he had the irresponsible appearance of a man trying to run upstairs in the opposite direction. It was all over quicker than pen can tell it ; and it was as much as ever that he managed to right himself and grab a stringer before the next gyration carried him off to star-board.

But he managed to grasp it—and there was the Reverend Simon V. Jones waving from the same stringer not more than twenty feet away from him.

“ I’ve got ye now, ye ——— * * * ——— *
 !!!!!!!!! ——— * * * * ——— * ye, ye ——— * * * ———
 ——— * * * * * ——— !!!!!!!!! ———
 ——— !!!!!!!!! ” they exclaimed together.

And, moved by a single impulse, hand over hand each began cautiously approaching the other.

Meantime Mr. Hoskins had withdrawn his anxious, thoughtful face from the hatch. Brought up in an atmosphere of checkers, the undisguised and almost inhuman ferocity of the scene on the ice had nearly unmanned him. He needed air, and to change the current of his thoughts he sat down on the quarter-deck and turned his eyes toward the distressed schooner — but he was up again instantly and gazing despairingly toward every other point of the compass. The distressed schooner was no longer deserted. Her signals of distress had given place to an ominous black banner ; and seven or eight sturdy rascals, armed to the teeth, were busily lowering her quarter boat.

Save for the two vessels no sail was visible. The captain, he knew, was too busy to be interrupted — and already the desperate wretches were pulling lustily away from their own vessel. The very horror of the situation lent a vibrant authority to Mate Hoskins’s voice that brought the crew of the *Mary* reluctantly from the hatch and sent them to

quarters. He put the wheel over ; there was a rattle of blocks and a flapping of canvas ; and the *Frozen Mary* settled on an even keel and leaped away with the wind fair behind her.

Down in the hold the sudden steadying of the cargo was so unexpected that it wrenched both combatants from their stringer and sent them spinning like a couple of disgusted tops toward the center of the vessel. They forgot each other. But around the neck of the Reverend Simon his long, black garment, split up the back as it was, spread itself like a wide collar ; the somber tail brushed the captain's wildly extended fingers — and he involuntarily grasped it just as his own feet went out from under him. Again the ridge of ice separated them. But now the hold was steady, and in his strong right hand Captain Nathan Gill held one end of a black frock coat and knew that the Reverend Simon V. Jones was securely fastened to the other end of it.

Hand over hand he pulled himself toward the icy summit, and each pull lifted the pirate a little nearer on the other side. Drawn tightly over the wretched fellow's head, the frock coat of the missionary held his negligible but suffering nose close to the hard, cold ice, and dragged him on it nearer and nearer a painful and fatal experience. He was at the captain's mercy — and involuntarily a little prayer shivered against the ice even while the crafty scoundrel sought desperately for some means of helping himself. And now Captain Nathan Gill peered over the summit. All he could see of his enemy was a broad, muscular back — *and directly in the small of it a tattooed Venus sat on a rock and played contentedly upon a banjo.* Little she cared for either the conventions of society or the outcome of this desperate struggle. Upside down as she was, she smiled at the captain, and the captain, all his

anger vanished, smiled back at the Venus in delighted recognition.

"Fannie!" he exclaimed breathlessly, "Fannie Gill, as I'm a seaman!"

A muffled voice came from under the coat. "Who's a-callin' of me girl's names?" it demanded tartly. "Who's a callin' —"? One free hand waved desperately. The captain caught it and released his hold on the confining garment. Across the ridge of ice two faces gazed at each other, the one delighted and the other indignant.

"Just the way you always used to take it when we called you Fannie," said the captain with a satisfied chuckle. "Who'd be calling you Fannie but your affectionate old brother Nathan?"

The pirate hesitated, stared, and wondered. Gladly would he have resumed the combat; but now that the hold was steady, he realized the likelihood of immediate reinforcement for his redoubtable adversary. It was better to temporize.

"You Nathan?" he echoed doubtfully. And then, with a sudden grin of comprehension: "Why, o' course you're Nathan. An' I'm glad to see ye. But it's a long time since anybody called me Fannie."

The moon, like a methodical washer-woman, was calmly bathing the cabin of the *Frozen Mary* when Apple Jack, the Pirate, sat up in the captain's berth and gazed sleepily round him. On the cabin table the mellow radiance touched with silver the tops of an empty arnica bottle, two partly filled rum bottles, and a couple of glasses; frosted the crown of a tall, black hat beside them; and revealed to the wondering pirate, now sitting on the edge of the

berth, the long, white garment that clothed his stalwart figure.

And no wonder he wondered ! For perhaps a minute the dishonest fellow curiously examined his familiar brown toes peeking coquettishly out from under the hem of this unfamiliar raiment. Then he remembered. Theoretically, he was not Apple Jack at all, but little Fannie Gill, the long-lost brother of Captain Nathan. They had met on the ice ; comforted each other with arnica ; and dined together in a fine state of brotherly enthusiasm. And the way he had managed to steer his fictitious identity through that brotherly dinner filled the reminiscent pirate with gentle and childlike admiration of his own cleverness. There had been just one way to do it. He had talked shop incessantly, and revealed himself convincingly to Captain Nathan as a reluctant pirate only too willing to quit the business and turn an honest seaman like his big brother. Then the captain's mind had wandered insistently to family anecdotes, and the resourceful rascal had promptly borrowed a nightgown and popped into bed to escape further conversation.

But actually to go sound asleep !— that had been the furthest thing possible from the tired fellow's intention. Escape was too immediately necessary : he must be off and away again in his little boat while the *Tender Polly* was still near enough to pick him up. Awake and rested, Apple Jack chuckled admiringly as he recalled what Captain Nathan had said to Mate Hoskins when he found that the *Frozen Mary* had changed her course and was visibly running away from the other vessel. Excited by his recovery of his little Fannie, Captain Gill had discovered this change of direction only when the *Tender Polly* was already hull down on the horizon. Then he had expressed himself to Mr. Hoskins, put the *Mary* back

on her regular course, and smiled contentedly as he saw that the pirate craft was again overhauling her. He was sixteen kinds of a peace lover, he explained to Hoskins, but he sincerely hoped to be painfully and eternally uncomfortable if he proposed to go out of his way for anybody.

Apple Jack got up quickly. His white-clad figure gleamed like a fairy in the moonlight as he climbed the companion ladder and peered cautiously out on deck. The ship's bell struck musically, and he knew that he had been asleep fully two hours. Hardly had it ceased striking when a gun boomed to windward ; and a sullen splash in the water to port told him that a cannon ball had crossed the bow of the *Mary*. The *Tender Polly* had overtaken her quarry ; and the canvas of the bark rattled as she came up into the wind and struck her colors in token of surrender. But to Apple Jack, the pirate, indignantly peering from the companionway, this was an act of rankest hypocrisy ; excusable perhaps in pirates, but hardly to be sufficiently condemned in persons who made a pretense of the commonest honesty.

Surrendered she might be to all outward appearance, but behind his bulwarks Captain Nathan was already prepared for desperate action. Her deck was cleared like that of a man-o'-war. Hidden from external view by a pile of innocent-looking provision casks, a couple of long guns swept her almost from stem to stern, and could be directed with deadly effect toward any point where the unsuspecting pirates might elect to board the vessel. Behind the bulwarks crouched the crew of the *Mary*, armed to their gritting teeth, and joyously awaiting the orders of their redoubtable captain to leap like tigers to the destruction of any innocent pirate whom the cruel guns might have left unfinished. As for Captain Nathan, the dauntless old

seaman stood with folded arms in the shadow of the main sail, and anybody with half an eye could have seen that, although he had had one good fight that day, he could hardly wait for another.

*“ You may chase a ship all day,
And when she is brought to bay,
Find her full o’ oats and hay.”*

Apple Jack heard this fierce and happy chorus coming nearer and nearer. These were his chosen messmates and jolly companions — and they were coming to rescue him, all unconscious of the cruel trap about to be sprung on them. Heartless wretch that one might sometimes have thought him, a dry sob rose in the pirate’s throat as he thought of the many unspeakable but happy times they had all had together. The wild expedient occurred to him of making a brotherly appeal to Captain Nathan. But his calmer judgment, what there was left of it, told him that he had not only criticized his companions too freely at dinner, but had also laid too much stress on his own distaste for pirates and piracy, to make the appeal anything but unconvincing.

“ All hands to stabbord ! ” said the captain in a low, harsh voice ; and as several dark figures crept across the deck, Apple Jack knew that his unsuspecting companions were approaching on that quarter. Louder and louder swelled the chorus ; and now he heard also the rhythmic thump of oars against thole-pins.

Then he knew that he must produce something more practical than a dry sob in the throat. The port side of the *Mary* was now altogether deserted ; a couple of dark shadows moved ominously behind the guns ; the attention of the entire ship was focused to starboard.

Hardly knowing what he did, or why he did it, the distressed Apple Jack bounded back into the cabin, took a long drink from the nearest bottle, put on his tall hat, tucked up the captain's nightgown, scrambled up the ladder, and dodged quickly to the port side of the vessel. Nobody saw him. He leaped desperately at the rigging and went aloft as fast as legs, arms, and an anxious heart could carry him. Soon he reached the topsail yard and clambered nimbly out on it until he overhung the starboard side of the *Mary*. Hardly twenty lengths from the bark, the long boat of the pirates leaped from wave to wave as seven lusty pairs of arms pulled at the oars and seven lustful pairs of eyes glared over their owners' shoulders at their expected victim. Directly below him the crew of the *Mary* crouched against the bulwarks, and the moonlight glinted on their treacherous weapons. It was an awful moment, tense with more kinds of emotion than there is time to pause and enumerate.

"He-e-y!" cried the pirate. "H-e-e-e-e-e-e-y, Whisker!"

It had a mournful sound, coming apparently from the cloudless sky and beseechingly elongated as the *Mary* rolled slowly from port to starboard.

"Whis-s-s-s-s-s-s-sker!" he repeated. "H-e-e-e-e-e-e-y!"

The pirates heard it—and so did Captain Nathan. The boat ceased moving, and the waves raced under it; the captain stepped indignantly from his place of concealment; the crouching seamen turned their eyes upward. At the extreme end of the topsail yard sat a man in a nightgown, and the moonlight gave him a weird and terrifying ghostliness. Now they saw more clearly what he was doing. He was waving his tall hat frantically at the boat load of pirates.

"Fannie!" cried the captain bitterly. "You, Fannie — come down off that topsail yard."

But the unresponsive Fannie had again put on his hat. Now he stood erect, his single garment waving about him, and his toes curling around the yard to help keep him steady.

"I'm a-comin'," he shouted, but not to Captain Nathan — and as the *Frozen Mary* again listed to starboard, there was a long, white flash in the moonlight as he shot headforemost toward the cool, distant water. Phosphorescent bubbles followed the tail of the captain's nightgown as it went down, down, down, and yet farther down until it vanished in the dark, unfathomable ocean like the tail of a comet. All the waters of the sea closed over it. And then, pop! exactly like a cork out of a champagne bottle, Apple Jack, the Pirate, still wearing his tall hat, shot up from the ocean. Up he came directly beside the long boat. Red Whisker caught him around the waist and pulled him in with them, dripping and breathless.

"Sheer off!" Apple Jack gasped chokingly. "Put about! Th' cussed hypocrite ain't surrendered — not by a jugful." Even as he spoke, a rattle of muskets confirmed his statement, and several bullets splashed great drops of water on the sturdy oarsmen. But Red Whisker was not the pirate to relinquish any prize that was worth a battle.

"What's th' cargo, Apple Jack?" he asked laconically, with his big hand on the tiller.

"Ice!" sputtered the other bitterly. "Nothin' but ice! I've been all over it m'self, an' that's all there is in her." It was an amazing statement, but he spoke with such conviction that the pirate boat swung round instantly toward their own vessel. From the *Mary* the firing had ceased abruptly, and Captain Nathan appeared anxiously at the bulwarks.



HERE WAS A LONG, WHITE FLASH IN THE MOONLIGHT

41

"Fannie!" he shouted earnestly, "Fannie!"

As he spoke, a tall figure in white rose in the stern of the pirate boat, now drawing rapidly away from the bark. It waved its hat to the captain, and its voice reached him from a distance.

"I ain't no Fannie," it replied with evident satisfaction. "I got that tattoo off'n a feller in Singapore."

The last words were almost inaudible, but the captain heard them. Longingly and ferociously he gazed at the *Tender Polly* until her graceful lines silhouetted themselves against the moon path as she beat to windward. Then he turned to the mate.

"Don't you ever talk to me any more, Mr. Hoskins, about tattoo," he said, with a dangerous kind of gravity. "It's a vain and silly practice, and that's the truth about it."

EIGHT BAD MEN AND TRUE

IN a low groggery, where the eagle above the bar looked as if it had died of delirium tremens and been stuffed for fun by an intoxicated taxidermist, eight fashionable dressed men smoked, drank, and fidgeted in a stew of impatience around a rum-stained table. It was a tough place ; there was nothing tougher in the 1820's along the New York water-front ; and to any acute observer these fretful men were the toughest things in it. It is enough to say that all the regular frequenters eyed them admiringly and kept at a safe distance.

They were, in fact, pirates ; and their curly brimmed beavers, their excellently tailored but somewhat ill-fitting swallow-tail coats, their satin neckwear, and their gold-headed canes testified (oh, horror !) to the exquisite taste of gentlemen passengers robbed and murdered at sea on their way from London. Whatever else they might seem, no ordinary policeman would have guessed the briny nature of their lawless occupation ; but the awed whisper of it had gone around the Stuck Pig Oyster Palace. Even there, at that period, it was a rare treat to see eight pirates together.

"Th' way I looks at it, messmates," one of this brutal but interesting group was saying, "be as we've waited day arter day fer Billy Slant-Eye till it ain't much use wear out shoe-leather a-lookin' or pants a-sittin'."

was a burly creature whose tanned nose jutted from between his fine red whiskers like a gnarled log just going over the brink of a raging waterfall. "As th' pooty motter says it — 'Together we stands up an' sep'rate we falls over.' Ef Slant-Eye had 'a' listened to me instid o' histin' an anchor an' settin' sail up-town all by hisself, we'd a' be aboard th' *Polly* this minit an' mebbe a-chasin' of a cute little packet."

Smoke filtered moodily through his whiskers ; and beside him a lank, sunburnt, devil-may-care companion in a dove-colored swallow-tail nervously rapped his front teeth with the rim of his large brass nose-ring.

"For my part, gentlemen all," he remarked between sippings, "I'm gettin' sick an' tired o' waitin' an' watchin'. Not I wants now be to put to sea an' rest my feet an' eyes, livver 'em !"

"If ye axes *me*, Whisker," drawled a tall, graceful discreant (graceful in a snake-like way), absently drawing a neat, wet, geometrical design on the table with the end of his long, handsome yellow mustaches, dipped for the purpose in his rum-and-water, "I'd say as a week ashore th' best we can do for him. Lost he be, pore feller ! — 't' nothin' left for us but to pipe a leetle chanty an' all hands aboardship."

It was a sensible suggestion ; ungrateful as pirates usually were, every cruel eye looked him a "Thank ye !" and every heartless head nodded approval. Salt water, deep under keel ; the untamable wind ; the flying quarry ; the blood-dabbled deck ; and the indescribable pleasure of dividing other people's personal property — these were their natural element. As for the Stuck Pig Oyster place, it was all right in its way, but one tough place very much like another. When you've seen one, you've seen all of 'em ! A week was enough of it.

But they knew also that every sodden eye in the was looking at them, and that pirates were expected to burst at intervals into wild and roaring ditties. The sailor-like beauty dried his mustaches carefully on a delicate lace handkerchief with somebody else's initials ; and all cleared their throats with gurgling swallows of rum-water, and began to roar good-naturedly :

*“ Let th’ good ship roll,
Like a tortured soul
On th’ devil’s fryin’-pan !
As we drag on deck
By th’ scruff of his neck
Th’ timid gentleman !
As we hauls by th’ heels
A dame as squeals,
‘ Oh ! Oh ! Please let me go ! ’
‘ We will,’ we remarks,
‘ To feed th’ sharks
In th’ tossin’ deep below ! ’
Oh-h-h ! you bet a dollar
Th’ more they holler,
Th’ more they kick an’ fuss
As, pair by pair,
They walks on air —
Th’ more of a lark for us ! ”*

It was a fine, satisfying, saltish ditty. A stranger who had just entered waited politely until they had finished ; then crossed the sanded floor of the palace. He, also, was dressed like a gentleman, albeit rather a seedy one, and carried himself with the erectness of a man who is afraid that sooner or later the weight of his stomach will tip him over.

"Red Whisker?" said the stranger politely. "Yellow Mustaches? Nose Ring? I *think* I am not mistaken."

He felt in his pocket. Instantly eight pirates were on their feet and eight hands had vanished simultaneously under as many coat-tails; had the fellow produced anything less innocent than a card-case he would have been shot before he knew it, in eight different places. He hummed "Yankee Doodle" — so might Daniel have hummed a popular Babylonian tune in the Den of Lions — as he extracted a card and laid it on the driest spot of the table. One after another the pirates studied it. Any school-boy could have made a bluff at reading:

HUBERT IRVINGTON HUBERTSON
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

INNOCENCE PROTECTED AT
REASONABLE RATES

But these were no schoolboys. None of them knew from what peaceful, cultivated homes the remote, insistent call of the sea might have lured the others; but they had all heard and answered too early to enjoy the enforced advantages of a public-school education. Most of us fortunately are compelled to go to school, but these men had escaped it. Words of one syllable were their limit; and perhaps Mr. Hubertson knew it, for he smiled understandingly.

"My friend *and* client, Billy Slant-Eye," continued Hubertson, carefully exploring another pocket, "told me I would probably find you at the Stuck Pig. Fortunately, events justify prophecy. I have a letter from him. Un-

fortunately, he is now occupying, temporarily I hope, Cell 42 in the City Prison."

No diplomatist could have presented his credentials better. The number of the cell was immaterial, but the place was exactly where their missing comrade might naturally have landed ; and this cool, corpulent, helpful-looking stranger was evidently his friend and confidant. He found the letter, drew up a chair, and resumed his rendition of "Yankee Doodle" as Red Whisker slowly deciphered their mate's message :

Dear Friends and good Mess Mates all,

I take my pen in hand to tell you that this fine fat fell Oh ! is my at or knee. That means he is an x spurt at the law, but do not fear him for that. He is the kind of x spurt who knows how to d feet the law and that is what we need now.

Yes, my dear friends, I am in a sell. My door is bard. I broke my one chair, and so I must sit all day on my tie knee bed, my head in my hands, and my eyes on my feet. Now and then a tear will trick l down in my mouth and make me think of when I was free and swum with you all in the great salt sea. I think the sea is like a big tear shed by all the poor men who weep in jails.

This is how I got in jail. I was in a crowd b four a wind Oh ! when a thief near me stole the watch and chain from an old man. The old man all most caught the thief. Then to my great sir prize the thief gave me the watch and chain quick and ran out of the crowd. But I kept my head. I put the watch and chain down my neck and ran two. But, a lass ! the pole ease caught me b four I could get to the Stuck Pig and they took me to jail.

My friends, I was like a wild bore with rage. The first thing I did was to take my chair in hand and wait for the turn key when he came to give me food. When he came I

world my chair round my head and got him good and hard just where your back bone stops at your neck. That is the place to hit a man with a chair. He fell with a short sick sob. His neck was broke n. So was my chair. If I had thought of that I would have hit him with my lit l wash stand. You need a chair so much more than you do a wash stand.

My at or knee heard of the watch and chain and came to help me out. When he heard of the turn key he said "Oh! Dear. Oh! Dear. This is worse and worse." Then he thought long and said "Was you a loan when you did this crime?" I said "Yes. A loan with the turn key." Then he said "In that case I might get you off with my x spurt skill, but I fear it would cost more than you could pay to save your neck this time." Then I told him the kind of men we are and how all we need to do for cash is to dig some up.

So here he is and that is how it is with me. I will die game if I must but you are just as dead if you die game as if you break down and kick and sob and tear your hair. He says he can get me off with your help. So trust him and do as he says and all may yet be well with your sad but hope full friend.

BILL SLANT-EYE.

P. S. I am two brave to fear, but Oh! I hate to be hung. I am two young. I am two young.

B. S. E.

Any way they looked at it, it was a pitiful letter, exuding something of the cold, damp atmosphere in which it was written. They almost saw him sitting on his tiny bed and composing it painfully on his little wash-stand.

"Stealin' of a watch an' killin' of a turn-key!" said Red Whisker thoughtfully. "An' ye think, Mister, as ye're smart enough to git him off'n it?"

Mr. Hubertson tried unsuccessfully to cross one leg over the other. "I don't boast, gentlemen," he replied with a simplicity that inspired confidence, "but it was the misfortune of Cain that he couldn't have *me* for his attorney."

In the court, tense with the accumulated suspense of a capital trial, Lawyer Hubertson was nearing the eloquent end of his address to an intelligent jury of four incorruptible citizens and eight pirates. Spectators, packed like human sardines in the oil of morbid curiosity, held their breath as they listened. The quill pens of the press scratched in chorus ; and the eight pirates, fresh from deep water and unused to jury duty, scuffed their feet nervously. Juries in those days were rather carelessly chosen. Of the thirty-six citizens who had been summoned for this trial, eight had changed hats, coats and identities with as many total strangers outside the court-house — pirate gold and the x spurt skill of Mr. Hubertson did it — and twenty-four had agreed to sit silent during the empaneling of the jury until these total strangers, answering for the first eight of them, had filed to the jury-box. It was bull luck for the Prosecution that the remaining four places went to the four citizens whom Mr. Hubertson had found absolutely incorruptible.

Among the witnesses, the old gentleman whose watch had been stolen mopped his face with a silk bandanna and shook his head weakly like a victim of senile dementia ; but few spectators pitied him. Their sympathy was for the poor man in the dock. As Mr. Hubertson had well said, a saint who looks like a criminal is far more to be pitied than a criminal who happens to look like a saint.

"The Defense," Mr. Hubertson was saying, "does not

deny that this old man, at some period of his useless life, may have owned a watch. You have heard him testify that his father gave him one. *I* believe it. His father is dead. One must believe something. You have heard him confess, with a reluctance that has not been without its significance, that he lost that watch. And you have followed my conscientious efforts to elicit from him, beyond a reasonable doubt, when, how, and where he obtained another. He 'has forgotten ;' he 'does not know ;' he 'does not remember ;' he 'is by no means certain ;' he 'refuses to answer.' Driven at last into a corner, he snarls that he 'still believes' the watch in this case to be his personal property. Why, gentlemen ! he does not even know the number — 11497 — a child would remember it — of the timepiece he has the unblushing effrontery to come here and testify was stolen from him by this defendant ! ”

Mr. Hubertson paused, took a drink of water, and let the significant fact sink slowly into his hearers.

Even without pirates on the jury it would have been a remarkable trial, for the energy, imagination, and acumen of Mr. Hubertson had exploded bomb after bomb in the camp of a district-attorney who had made the natural mistake of not taking the case with sufficient seriousness. The facts were too obvious. The prisoner had no witnesses. He had been caught with the watch. Nobody else could have killed the turnkey. Press and Public were indifferent to him. The first day of the trial had been almost without spectators. Mr. Hubertson would delay justice, lose his case, and pocket a fee for doing so. The court knew him as a petty criminal lawyer of rather flamboyant imagination ; what it did not suspect was that, for the first time in his career, Mr. Hubertson was properly financed.

The legal record, familiar to students of law as "9 Puff (N. Y.) 1345 : People vs. Toadhunter," believes to this day that Slant-Eye's real name was Obadiah Toadhunter ; that he had come to New York from Violetdale, New Hampshire ; that he enjoyed chewing a straw ; and that the rusty, camphor-smelling black coat and high, uncomfortable collar in which his attorney presented him to the jury were the "best clothes" (and this in itself was pathetic) worn hitherto only at weddings, funerals, corn-huskings, and other innocent village dissipations.

There was then no telegraph from New York to prove that there was no Violetdale in New Hampshire, nor any system of police communication by which a startled district-attorney could quickly locate the real township from which Mr. Hubertson had produced the quaint old countryfolk who now sat timidly together on the yellow settee reserved for witnesses.

No witnesses for the prisoner ? *These were his witnesses.* And they were real country people : there shone the genius of Hubert Hubertson ! Anywhere you might have seen it, the group would have been touchingly venerable, except for Obadiah's girlish sweetheart, Priscilla Eaton : and Miss Eaton would have made any man who was a man feel like taking her in his arms and comforting her. The very presence of these old folks from home had jumped the case into the public eye and heart, and crowded the court on the second morning.

As the *Evening Gazette* had said in an editorial :

"Justice must be upheld. The innocent must suffer with the guilty. Yet we should esteem ourself less than human if we did not hope that the tender instinct of these fine old Violetdadians will be justified ; and that evidence may yet be forthcoming to refute testimony that is, so far, largely circumstantial."

No case, in short, could have been going better for the Defense, and nothing clouded the satisfaction of Mr. Hubertson except the behavior of his eight pirates. Like all born orators, Mr. Hubertson was keenly sensitive to the mood of his audience ; he liked to feel his hearers following his thought like sunflowers following the sun ; and nothing is more distressing to such a mind than an audience that scowls, whispers, and scuffs with its feet. Of course they knew he was lying — but that should have made them all the more appreciative of the grand style in which he was doing it.

“ And now, gentlemen,” went on Mr. Hubertson, “ who, I ask you, *does* remember the number of this watch ? The defendant’s white-haired father, who gave it to him on his twenty-first birthday ! His gentle, aged mother, who helped pick it out ! The venerable men to whom he showed it, *pointing to the number with that natural pride that we all feel in our first watch !* And to whom did this good young man show it ? To no tavern companions, but to the fine old clergyman who had baptized him Obadiah in the Second Baptist Church of Violetdale ; and to the stern, gentle, time-worn doctor who had saved him from measles and whooping-cough — childish distempers from which we have all suffered. You will say,” he added with a contemptuous glance at the district-attorney, “ that Miss Eaton did not remember it. I grant you that. Yes, I grant you that. *I make no charges. I only state, without hesitation, as these gentlemen will state in the sacred seclusion of their incorruptible jury, that I, or you, Mr. District-Attorney, or any one of us, being a stranger in New York and feeling alien fingers, old or young, tugging at his watch-chain, would drop his watch down his neck and hurry from such a dangerous neighborhood !*”

"Which don't hide from *me*," whispered Juryman Red Whisker to Juryman Yellow Mustaches, "as it were th' ole feller's watch to start with."

"And now, gentlemen," resumed Mr. Hubertson, "I might make a joke and say that I turn from watch to turnkey ["An' a cussed pore spec'men now ye've got it out!" muttered Juryman Yellow Mustaches.] But this is no time for humor. ["It's time fer a drink!" whispered Juryman Nose Ring to his next neighbor. "An' a long time over!"] You will no doubt argue that any one of us, thrown into a gloomy cell on the absurd charge of stealing his own watch, would lose his temper and assault the turnkey, fatally if possible. But you will decide also whether such an assault was actually committed. There was no witness. I can not summon the turnkey before you. I am not Gabriel. ["An' a pooty one ye'd make, cuss ye!" muttered Juryman Yellow Mustaches.] If I *were* Gabriel, I would blow my trump, call that unfortunate official to the witness-stand, and ask him one question: '*Did you, or did you not, on entering this defendant's cell, TRIP, FALL, and STRIKE YOUR HEAD FATALLY against a CHAIR?*'"

It was a pertinent, surprising question; and the way he put it made most of his hearers see him — a fat, side-whiskered Gabriel, white-robed and blowing. In the jury-box, Tarbosh, Sullivan, Doodleberg, and Weeks, the four incorruptible citizens, sat rigid with conscientious attention; but it jarred Mr. Hubertson to see that the rest of the jury fidgeted even in the presence of Gabriel. Glad as he was to have them there, he again wished heartily that they were either not so nervous or would be polite enough to conceal it. Nothing had completely held their attention but the testimony of the old folks from home; and especially Miss Eaton's prettily bashful relation of her

engagement to Obadiah. Probably, thought Mr. Hubertson, they had no taste for oratory (as some men have no real feeling for the cornet), but the least they could do was to look a little more as if they believed what he was saying.

The important thing, however, was that Tarbosh, Sullivan, Doodleberg, and Weeks hung on his words with a flattering attention.

"My learned brother," he resumed with an indignant glance at the pirates that at least stopped their whispering, "smiles to think that this conclusive evidence is impossible. Let him not be too certain! You, gentlemen, can summon that witness, not by the discredited arts of the magician, but by SHEER INTELLECT! You, gentlemen, can evoke that scene as it *must* have happened with a Toadhunter — not as it might have happened had I, for example, been the prisoner. You know, for you have heard this wise old physician testify, that Obadiah Toadhunter could not bear the sight of blood. He fainted if he cut his finger. And you have heard this aged father testify that he could not beat — I repeat his own words, spoken with what sincerity of remorseful tears we have all witnessed! — he could not beat, thrash, pommel, or otherwise persuade his tender-hearted son into killing a potato-bug. Obadiah Toadhunter *could not* kill potato-bugs. Does it need a miracle, gentlemen, to convince you, beyond reasonable doubt, that he could not kill turnkeys? Or do you *need* the turnkey to tell you how, on that fatal evening, in the half light of that gloomy cell, he tripped and fell, breaking the chair, breaking his neck, and, except for *you*, breaking the life of this fine young husbandman, his aged father and mother, his oldest friends, and, last but not least, this sweet girl graduate of the Violetdale High School who I see has again swooned from the excess of her natural emotions?"

He sat down, visibly overcome by his own emotion ; and Judge Bean, rising behind his desk, cleared his throat preparatory to charging the jury.

In the smoky jury-room twelve stern men — sternness was about the only quality they had in common — agreed to consider the turnkey first and the watch afterward. On this count, Judge Bean had charged them with his usual dry, judicial common-sense. The Prosecution, he said, claimed that Toadhunter had waited, chair in hand, for his victim : if they believed the Prosecution they would find Toadhunter guilty. The Defense, he added, *said* the turnkey had tripped, fallen, and broken his own neck : if they believed *that* they would find Toadhunter innocent. And now the jury had been out five hours. Nineteen ballots, each obstinately repeating :

Guilty.8

Not Guilty.4

had already been taken. There they stuck — four incorruptible citizens on one side and eight pirates on the other. As Yellow Mustaches characteristically put it, what in ———— !!!! ———— !! ———— !! ———— !!!!! ———— were they going to do next ?

“ I’ll sit here an’ die o’ thirst,” said Juryman Red Whisker doggedly, “ afore I’ll toddle back in that courtroom an’ be made a laffin’-stock. Any fool can see as Slant-Eye Toadhunter killed th’ turnkey. An’ as for his silly fam’ly, wot ye seems to think so much on, Mr. Tabbosh — you take it from me as they’ll be better off without him.”

“ *They* don’t think so,” said Mr. Tarbosh, an honest man with a thin beard and an indomitable obstinacy. “ But

the important fact to me is that Toadhunter's father couldn't make him kill the potato-bugs. You can't get round it. As the twig is bent, gentlemen, so is the tree inclined. Nothing will ever convince me that that man could commit murder."

"You take it from *me*, Tabbosh," said Juryman Nose Ring keenly, "if th' cuss wouldn't kill potato-bugs, it weren't becoss his heart stopped him. It were his stom-mick. Mebbe it made him feel sick, like, to see th' leetle fellers go squash." And he blew six triumphant puffs of smoke straight through his pendant nose ornament.

Truly it was a scene and situation quite unlike what Mr. Hubertson had anticipated ; and yet he was directly responsible. Skilfully as he might forecast the effect of Violetdale and oratory on incorruptible citizens, yet men with hearts in their bosoms, Mr. Hubertson had never before addressed a jury of pirates, men without hearts in their bosoms, proud of it, and likely, if anything, to be repelled and disgusted by any obvious appeal to that flabby center of feminizing emotion. From his point of view, eight jurors were safely accounted for ; at the worst, disagreement was certain ; and he had, so to speak, spit on the palms of eloquence and gone hot-foot after Tarbosh, Sullivan, Doodleberg, and Weeks to make sure of acquittal.

He had convinced Tarbosh, Sullivan, Doodleberg, and Weeks — but he had also, up to a certain point, convinced Red Whisker, Yellow Mustaches, and their evil associates. If you have no heart, there are your eyes, ears, and keen native intelligence. He had convinced them, almost from the beginning, that they were a remarkably brainy and patriotic jury. He had convinced them that Slant-Eye's real name was Obadiah Toadhunter. They had known nothing of Slant-Eye's youth or antecedents ; his name might easily enough have been Toad-

hunter ; and they been uninformed of Mr. Hubertson's intentions.

Almost before they knew it they had swallowed the old folks from Violetdale ; swallowed Miss Eaton ; swallowed the potato-bugs. And, in proportion as they digested these morsels, they had lost Slant-Eye, whom they had known and loved for his blood-thirsty and unsentimental character, in a Toadhunter who, frankly, made them extremely tired. The one thing they had not swallowed was that Obadiah Toadhunter had not killed the turnkey. There they knew better !

And every mushy effort of Mr. Hubertson to make them believe the contrary — for they forgot completely that he was not really addressing them — had insulted their new-born self-respect as jurymen and increased their hostility to his straw-chewing client.

"So here we sits, twelve oncommonly brainy men," snarled a short, stout pirate whose irregular, brown face and small, knobby nose gave him an almost comic resemblance to the chosen prey of the insect under discussion, "an' wot I axes is : Be we a-tryin' of this cussed assassin fer killin' a potato-bug ? Or be we a-tryin' of him fer killin' a turnkey ?"

"We are not trying of him at all," said Mr. Tarbosh with coldly sarcastic emphasis. "We are examining evidence. And when his own father testifies that he couldn't —"

It was a hopeless discussion. It went round and round, like a happy child on the flying horses, and came back each time just where it started. It accomplished nothing but to make a man thirsty. Red Whisker, Yellow Mustaches, Nose Ring, and the wretch whose appearance suggested a cruel but intelligent potato, looked again at their watches, muttered between their teeth, and glanced with

savage despair at the door and windows. The four other pirates had sensibly gone to sleep, sarcastically leaving instructions to call them in time for the next ballot.

A locked door! Barred windows! Although they had Tarbosh, Sullivan, Doodleberg, and Weeks right there in the room with them, they knew better, face to face as they had just been with the grim and awful majesty of a judge sitting on a bench, than to yield to natural impulse, spring upon their fellow jurymen, and tear their incorruptible limbs from their incorruptible bodies. No way out of it but to make them see by peaceful persuasion that Toad-hunter deserved hanging. After that they might get a chance at Hubertson, who had said nothing whatever about this absurd practise of locking men up to talk things over.

And with nothing to drink but water!!!!

"When I was with Jackson at New Orleans," said Mr. Sullivan suddenly, perhaps remembering that it was at least twenty minutes since he had modestly mentioned his war record, "one of our men fell out of a window and broke his neck. I put the fact forward for what it is worth."

Mr. Weeks drummed on the table to attract attention. He leaned forward. He had something so important to say that, command himself as he might, he could hardly say it.

"It strikes me as worth a good deal," he exclaimed forcibly. "Follow me now, closely. Putting together what this gentleman has suggested about squashing potato-bugs and what this gentleman tells us of his personal observation of a man breaking his neck from a fall, I don't see, really, how we can escape two conclusions. First: the prisoner might have killed the turnkey. Second: the turnkey might have killed himself. Gentlemen, I think we are getting nearer a solution."

Red Whisker spat out a bitter and complicated oath — perhaps the most shocking that has ever, before or since, been heard in a jury-room. His quick, resourceful mind saw clearly that they were not getting nearer a solution ; were, if anything, farther away than ever. He grasped his passions in one strong hand and rubbed his head violently with the other. Tarbosh ! Sullivan ! Doodleberg ! Weeks ! He studied them savagely through half-closed eyelids : nothing, evidently, would convince the numbskills but some tangible proof, the inevitable conviction of an eye-witness.

Well, they should have it !

He laid his pipe carefully on the table ; pushed back his chair with a hideous squeak that awoke his sleeping companions ; dragged his chair across the room, and stood it up forcibly in the corner. Then, grinding his teeth steadily behind his quivering whiskers, he paced six paces from the chair and marked the place with a " guilty " ballot.

Then he stopped grinding his teeth long enough to articulate.

" There's th' chair," he said briskly, " an' there's th' door o' th' cell where they locked th' cuss up. If any gentleman in this room can fall over that ballot an' manage to break his neck a-hittin' that chair, I'll vote Not Guilty. An' wot's more," he added, as no one rose eagerly to try the experiment, " I'll show ye m'self as it ain't possible ! "

At that tense moment, as often happens when twelve intelligent men strive to penetrate through a fog of conflicting evidence to the lighthouse of truth, not one of them thought of Obadiah Toadhunter. He had become a Case. He had no aged parents, no girlish sweetheart ; he had never been baptized by one venerable man and saved from measles and whooping-cough by another.

The whole grave problem, discussed, as it were, in the very shadow of the gallows, simmered down to one practical question : would, or would not, this forceful juryman break his neck ?

The seven pirates looked worried — but well they knew that no human power could stop their comrade as he backed slowly to the far end of the jury-room. The conscientious faces of Tarbosh, Sullivan, Doodleberg, and Weeks beamed already with the ineffable expression of men who told you so.

“Here I goes, gentlemen !” cried Red Whisker warningly ; and added, with fine sarcasm : “If I breaks my neck I app’ints Mr. Tabbosh to throw my leetle vote at th’ next election.” Without another word he hurled himself chairward. Truly had Mr. Hubertson said that by **SHEER INTELLECT** they would be able to summon the turnkey into their jury-room. . . . He reached the ballot ; he left the floor ; for what seemed a long time they saw the twin soles of his shoes, supported (like a modern aeroplane) only by the speed of his indomitable propeller. And then, at last, the shocking thud of a falling body and the crash of splintered furniture !

Even Mr. Tarbosh had to admit, beyond a reasonable doubt, that no turnkey could have hit a chair harder.

Everybody in the court stood up, like one man and woman. Twilight was falling ; here and there a lamp had been lighted ; and Judge Bean was again taking his place on the bench. He was a small, dignified justice, his bench presumably hidden somewhere behind his high desk ; and when he sat down on it he looked, from some parts of the court-room, exactly like a human head cut off and left on the desk until somebody should call for it. Opposite this

legal head and beyond the legal furniture where the clerk of the court shuffled his papers and the district-attorney consulted with his assistants, Mr. Hubertson chatted with his client, doubtless consoling him for the absence of Mr. and Mrs. Toadhunter, Miss Eaton, the Rev. Mr. Hopkins, and good old Dr. Hooper.

Spectators whispered to each other that no wonder the old folks from home were unable to bear the strain of hearing the verdict — poor dears ! they had been through enough already ! Yet it was rather a pity they were not present. Without them something would be lacking of the supreme emotion that the pale, expectant audience had been waiting all day to experience. Little they guessed that Mr. Hubertson was humming “Yankee Doodle” under his breath, perfectly certain that the return of the jury at this hour could mean nothing short of acquittal.

Nor did they imagine — how could they ? — the mental ditty to which Obadiah Toadhunter was complacently chewing his straw :

*“ Th’ fust time as ye kills a man
It makes ye kinder ill.
Ye feels so hot ye needs a tan,
An’ then ye has a chill.
Th’ second one, he ain’t so bad,
Although he’s painful, too ;
For killin’ allus makes ye sad
Ontil ye’ve killed a few.*

*“ But when ye’ve killed a score o’ men
Ye’re gittin’ used to it.
Th’ twenty-fust ye slaughters then
Don’t bother ye a bit.
An’ arter that it’s pooty tame,*

*Ye hardly stops to think.
For killin' men is just th' same
As takin' of a drink."*

"The unconcern of the man Toadhunter," writes Judge Bean in his interesting chapter, "My Experience with the Criminal Toadhunter : an Explanation" [see "Memories of Bench and Bar": J. Q. Bean], "interested me greatly. He was genuinely cheerful. He seemed actually to regard the forthcoming verdict as something amusing. As I have said already, in a long experience with depraved and criminal types, Toadhunter was the most evil-looking man (with the possible exception of seven or eight of the jury) that I had ever seen in the dock. I disliked him immensely. He was a murderer if ever I saw one, wide-jawed, frowsy-headed, and with a Mongolian cast of countenance strongly emphasized by the oblique position of the cruelest eyes I have ever looked into. When those eyes were on me, I confess to feeling like a mouse under the surveillance of a cat ; or, to be more exact, as such a mouse might feel if endowed with my own keen, critical intelligence. During the trial he eyed me with increasing malice. As the event proved afterward, the ignorant fellow held me personally responsible for his unpleasant predicament."

A door at the right opened ; the jury filed to their places. Anybody could see that the conscientious men had been having a hard time of it. Four were pallid with their awful responsibility ; seven as pallid as their tan permitted ; the twelfth, his complexion hidden by his magnificent red whiskers, showed a black-and-blue lump, about the size of a small egg, on his forehead, which he fingered delicately to find out whether it was still swelling. It had been a hard bump, but it had done the business ;

convinced Tarbosh, Sullivan, Doodleberg, and Weeks ; upset the nice-laid plans of Mr. Hubertson — and was about to hang Obadiah Toadhunter.

All together the eight pirates glanced with grim satisfaction at their former comrade.

And from the dock Slant-Eye smiled back at them — a confident, joyous, happy, contented, come-and-let-us-murder-and-rob-together-again smile that brushed away every Hubertsonian cobweb, and revealed him to them, the same old Slant-Eye, a worse man, if possible, and a better pirate than when he had been arrested. One after another, so rapidly that the result was instantaneous, their wicked minds reverted to the time before the trial : and horror, consternation, and despair spread like warm butter over every sin-toasted countenance. What, after all, did his parents matter ? They saw him, in swift imagination, hanging like so much bacon — and nothing under him but hundreds of smiling, upturned, interested faces.

And it was they who had done it with their little ballots !

The clerk of the court was speaking, putting the formal question : Was Obadiah Toadhunter guilty, or was he not ? Somewhere somebody dropped a pin and everybody else heard it.

“Guilty !” said Foreman Doodleberg. The word issued reluctantly from his pale, firm lips, rose to the ceiling, circled the courtroom, fluttered into the very corners — a black word, followed by a profound and seemingly eternal silence.

“And so say you all, gentlemen of the jury ?” asked the clerk solemnly.

To an amazement from which he never fully recovered, eight of them answered at the same moment.

“*Him* guilty !” sneered Yellow Mustaches contemptuously.

"You bet we don't, ole feller!" shouted Nose Ring defiantly.

"No such cussed fools as that!" howled the human potato.

"Duddlebug's a liar!" bellowed four other jurymen together.

"Wot we agreed were as he's as innercent as a nussin' lamb, pore feller!" roared the juror with the bump; and he caught foreman Doodleberg by his conscientious neck and began shaking him with all the fury of his accumulated desire for rum-and-water.

Rarely, if ever, in a court of justice has a jury experienced a change of heart so soon after bringing in a verdict; and still more rarely has two-thirds of the jury started in to pommel and shake the remaining jurymen. They had long wanted to get their strong, anxious hands on Tarbosh, Sullivan, Doodleberg, and Weeks: now they would satisfy that lust, whatever happened; and they did it so thoroughly that no one else, for the moment, dared get within reach of them.

The scene focused attention on the jury-box. On the crowded benches a lady spectator hysterically giggled herself off into a dead faint, and sat, senseless and, what was worse, unseeing, between two others so interested in the jury that they didn't even know she had fainted. Lawyers, court officers, policemen hovered around the jury-box. The space between judge and prisoner was completely emptied. On three sides of the prisoner the cage rose higher than his head, but it was only waist high on the side nearest the bench. And at the moment when he fully grasped Mr. Doodleberg's verdict, Obadiah Toadhunter, unnoticed in the succeeding excitement, had begun climbing over this insufficient barrier.

"I had been watching the prisoner closely," writes

"Therefore I reversed my formula. 'Come on! Come on!' I said as I extricated my person from my coat, left the garment in the hands of the prisoner, and vaulted nimbly over the fairly high rail at the right of the bench. The witness-stand was before me. I cleared it in the manner of children when they play 'leap-frog,' and ran lightly into the judges' corridor. Still repeating 'Come on! Come on!' I led him swiftly along the corridor, down the stairs, and so to the entrance. But I was disappointed to find that the policeman had stepped away for a few moments."

Practically considered, the time between Red Whisker's assault on Mr. Doodleberg and Slant-Eye's arrival on Judge Bean's desk could have been only a few seconds — certainly less than half a minute. But busy as he was, the resourceful Red Whisker saw what had happened and passed a quick word to his equally busy companions. Hardly had Judge Bean leap-frogged the witness-stand, hardly had Obadiah Toadhunter leap-frogged it after him, before Red Whisker had given Mr. Doodleberg a complicated and painful farewell shake and was over the jury-rail.

Nose Ring followed ; Yellow Mustaches pursued Nose Ring : it was like the circus when the entire company jump over the elephants, except that here none of the performers turned somersaults. The air of the court, in a bee-line from the jury-box to the judges' corridor, was full of jurymen. It was the only available exit from that crowded court-room, and yet, for a moment, no observer could guess what they were doing or why they were doing it. The corridor swallowed them.

Three hours later, in the cabin of a small, rakish-looking schooner steadily holding a seaward course down the harbor, nine wicked but cheerful men sat cosily at dinner.

"An' mebbe th' luckiest thing o' all," said Red Whisker contentedly, "were as Slant-Eye Toadhunter reckernized th' leetle wagon as they totes ye off to jail in. There she were a-waitin' fer us when we chases of th' jedge out o' th' court-house. An' nothin' to do but pile aboard lively, tickle th' driver in th' ribs business-like, an' tell him to keep th' fog-bell a-goin' an' pint fer th' harbor."

THE GLUE THAT BINDS

ON the deck of the *Susan-Mary*, Boston to Canton, Captain Nathan Gill sniffed the air of the China Sea critically, and pointed his weather-beaten old nose now north-north-west and again north by east.

It was a fair morning in the early 1830's, and the *Susan-Mary*, close-hauled to the breeze that shepherded a flock of Chinese-white clouds above the Chinese-blue ocean, was at last approaching the mouth of Canton River. Already she had sighted junks ; but just now only two sails were visible, a British merchantman, presumably outward-bound from Canton, approaching on her port bow, and a small, rakish-looking black schooner coming up rapidly on her port beam. Thus the three vessels formed a contracting triangle.

It was a pretty marine picture, and yet Captain Gill sniffed at it. Old, experienced sea-dog that he was, he had objected to taking out an unarmed vessel ; but Mr. Silas Pettigrew, fitting the *Susan-Mary* to introduce his famous E Pluribus Unum Fish Glue to the teeming population of China, believed in Universal Peace and had overruled the objection. And now, almost within sight of his destination, something in the air seemed strangely sinister — a faint, subtle aroma distinguishable only to a nose made delicate by sixty-odd years of seafaring.

Captain Nathan told himself he would know what it

was presently ; meantime he got his glass and examined the schooner. She was a tidy, seamanlike vessel. On the field of vision a burly seaman popped into view like a jack-in-the-box, an innocent but nerve-racking toy to which his wild red whiskers gave him a strong family resemblance ; but unlike any jack-in-the-box yet manufactured, he, too, had a telescope. Catching the captain's eye, he waved his hand cheerily, a gesture to which the other absently but politely responded. Otherwise the deck seemed empty except for a stout, bald-headed helmsman, whose mouth opened and closed spasmodically. Evidently the fellow was singing, and, had Captain Nathan been familiar with the lip alphabet, he would have been able to hear him :

*" In sun an' shade our horrid trade
We follers night an' day.
To make folks croak we think a joke,
We murders while we may.
Some men delight in lily-white
An' see-dentary lives ;
But loot an' kill we allus will
While one o' us survives.*

*" We risks th' noose, but wot's th' use
O' swingin' till ye're swung ?
They does th' trick so neat an' quick
Ye hardly know ye're hung.
To die in bed, when all is said,
Is ladylike an' tame.
It lacks th' fun o' bein' one
As dies exceedin' game.*

*" Our sharpened steel we likes to feel
A-carvin' human — "*

4



THE HELMSMAN CONTINUED TO HUM, AND AS THE SEVEN
BLADE-SHARPENERS HUMMED IN CHORUS THE
EFFECT WAS CURIOUSLY AND HIDEOUSLY BEEISH

"Avast th' ditty, Bald Head!" said the red-whiskered man suddenly. "Th' cap'n's a-wrigglin' of his stabbord ear, an' it ain't no use tellin' th' pore cuss wot's a-comin' till we hists th' rover."

"An' wot's th' matter o' histin' ole Skull-an'-Bones to once, Whisker?" queried a tall, wickedly handsome fellow, whose long, graceful yellow mustaches had been tucked over his ears to keep them out of harm's way as he sat with six others under the weather bulwarks, all more or less naked, busily sharpening cutlasses on the soles of their bare, leathery feet. He tried the edge of his cutlas on his hairy forearm and smiled with cruel satisfaction to find it almost sharp enough to shave with.

"Th' matter o' that, Yaller Mustaches," said Red Whisker decisively, "is as here be two pooty vessels a-comin' together—an' we wants to git both on 'em." He again waved his hand to the threatened Susan-Mary with hypocritical friendliness.

Behind the bulwarks, safely hidden from Captain Nathan's telescope, the seven men grinned at one another with horrible understanding. The helmsman stopped singing; but he continued to hum, and as the seven blade-sharpeners hummed in chorus the effect was curiously and hideously beeish. Every now and then they paused and dipped, bee-like, into a pannikin of rum that went from one to another; and even if their occupation had not betrayed them, the untamed criminality of their hard-baked faces, had the captain seen them, would have left no possible doubt of their character.

When the cutlasses were sharpened, each took a blade in his teeth, wriggled on his belly across the deck, and disappeared, head first like a snake, into the cabin.

Meantime aboard the *Susan-Mary* Captain Gill had called up his first officer.

"Mr. Tarr," he asked, "did ye ever smell pirates?"

Mr. Tarr frowned, and then thought better of it. There was something in the captain's cold, calm eye that discouraged criticism; and if this was coarse humor, Mr. Tarr decided he had better fall in with it.

"What do they smell like?" he asked curiously.

"Rum an' villainy!" said the captain gravely. "Jest as the British navy smells o' soap an' tyranny. An', wot's more, Mr. Tarr," he added, moving his old nose like a rabbit, "*I smell both on 'em!*"

At that statement, so matter-of-fact that it precluded anything but the most serious conviction, Mr. Tarr paled under his tan. He was a young officer, unfamiliar with pirates, unable to smell anything out of the ordinary and, like many of us, unwilling to admit that he did — unless, for example, it was roses or a steak and onions. But he had often heard of the remarkable powers of observation developed by experience in a man like the captain. He hazarded an explanation, but he had no real faith in it.

"Perhaps it's the glue, captain," he suggested.

"Glue!" sneered Captain Gill. "It's pirates an' British navy, though I ain't so sure of the navy, an' mebbe it's only a retired officer, traveling passenger, aboard yonder merchantman. Pirates it be, Mr. Tarr, an' they're on that schooner! But ef they think Cap'n Nathan Gill is easy looted, they're off their reckonin'. I've fit 'em with guns an' now — God bless my soul! — I'll fight 'em with glue an' bilin' water! Have th' men heave up a hogshead o' th' E Pluribus Unum, Mr. Tarr, an' spread th' sticky stuff over th' deck just back o' th' bulwarks. An' tell cookie to start th' wash-biler, hitch the fire-hose to th' biler, man th' pump, an' bring me th' nozzle."

At such a moment one man dominates everything; inspires confidence; drives, so to speak, the fist of audacity

into the solar plexus of despair. The merchantman might or might not be able to help them, but it was unwise to count on her ; what the captain wanted was for the schooner to attempt boarding.

Fortunately, the glue had been shipped in hogsheads as well as bottles ; and busy seamen, under Mr. Tarr's pallid but able direction, spread it with paint-brushes. They used up a hogshead ; and behind their feverishly painting figures smoke and steam poured from the galley. Even Mr. Barker, the super-cargo, was busy, wringing his hands one way to think of the waste of glue if the captain's nose was mistaken ; and then wringing them the other to think of the waste of human life if the nose was right and the glue failed to stop and bewilder the invaders until Captain Nathan could drive them back with his boiling water.

Half an hour ran rapidly into eternity ; and now the nose was completely vindicated. The schooner was on them, her bow alive with bandaged heads, nefariously expectant faces, and teeth-gripped cutlasses ; and above this awful exhibit — the captain wished that Mr. Silas Pettigrew might be there to see it ! — a black flag climbed the mast and unfolded its grinning death's-head with a flippety-flip-flap-flip that sounded like a demoniac titter. Everybody, such is the power of imagination and suggestion, smelt pirates ; everybody (if the noise they made could be called music) heard them singing :

*"Th' good ole man, he walks th' plank,
His step is firm but slow,
Ho, boys : ho !
He hits th' ocean —"*

" Pump !!!! " roared Captain Nathan, and leveled the nozzle.

The ships ground together, and Red Whisker, always first in any desperate venture, vaulted the bulwarks : but Captain Nathan got him in mid-air and he landed back again, upside down and cursing defiantly, on his own vessel.

Passing him like a living oath, the bald-headed pirate dodged the hose and was over the bulwarks. He landed like the first rain-drop of a summer shower, only considerably harder ; and at the same instant, so that the very sound might have been made by his solid impact, a cannon boomed unexpectedly abeam the *Susan-Mary*. Quickly as she had made the attack, the pirate schooner dropped astern, and Captain Gill wasted hot water on the China Sea as it widened between them.

Right you were again with your wise old nose, Captain Nathan, although you modestly doubted it ! The side of the merchantman, now well within gunshot, had opened in a dozen portholes, through which a dozen guns spoke viciously. The schooner fled. H. M. S. *Spitfire*, disguised as a peaceful merchantman for this very purpose of fooling pirates, pursued her vindictively. And from the deck of the *Susan-Mary* arose a plaintive stream of indescribable profanity.

Just inside the bulwarks the bald-headed pirate sat on the tenacious deck and tried in vain to get up — very much like an enormous fly on the sticky fly-paper which had not yet been invented. Now he lifted a foot ; now he lifted a hand ; but there remained always a larger surface directly under him — and to detach *that*, it was necessary to put both hand and foot back again. Unsticking himself was a hopeless business, and yet he stuck to it.

All the time he talked to himself bitterly (the cutlas that he still gripped in his teeth giving a sharper edge to what he was saying), without paying the slightest atten-

tion to whoever was hearing him. And all the time his evil associates, who very likely had not yet missed him, led the *Spitfire* farther and farther from the *Susan-Mary*.

In the cabin of the *Susan-Mary*, swinging at anchor opposite the spot allotted to the Foreign Colony some miles below Canton, Mr. Ezra Barker was introducing Pettigrew's E Pluribus Unum Fish Glue to a Hong merchant ; and the pidgin-English of the supercargo, mingled with booming gongs and popping firecrackers outside the vessel, gloomily told Bald Head, the Pirate, that he was now in China. Bound hand and foot in an adjoining stateroom, he listened moodily, for he knew already too much about Pettigrew's to take any real pleasure in hearing how Mr. Silas Pettigrew had come to invent it.

Four days captured, he was still alive, horribly unshaven, as wicked as ever, and perhaps a shade thinner ; but who could say what he would be like by the time the *Susan-Mary* had carried him half-way round the world to Boston and he had arrived at the gallows ?

Nor would he make that journey in this airy, comfortable stateroom, where he lay at present because the captain had no irons. To-morrow at latest, so Captain Nathan had told him as he cheerfully measured his scowling captive's neck with a piece of string, he would go ashore and purchase a steel collar with a chain to it ; and then it would be the dark, damp hold for Bald Head, and rats nibbling his toes and fingers whenever he tried to forget his misery in restless slumber.

Hanging, as the pirate had so light-heartedly sung less than a week ago, is a quick business ; you hardly know it is happening before it is over. But the song had nothing to say about traveling a hundred and thirty-odd days in

the hold of a vessel that has been laden with fish-glue !
And with rats for society !

Pirates, however, were seldom worriers. Bald Head suffered ; but the thing that distressed him far more than to-morrow's rats or next winter's gallows, was his own immediate and increasing need of a shave. He was a neat pirate — the kind of man, in fact, who to-day buys all the new safety razors as fast as they are invented — and accustomed to shave regularly before breakfast. His chin, like that of many better but equally bald men, was ironically productive (perhaps this over-activity in one place accounts for under-activity in another), and now, looking downward across his fat cheeks, he could see the bristles. They were like an army. Had the vile wretch been familiar with Shakespeare, he would have thought instinctively of Birnam Wood coming on to Dunsinane. As it was, he thought of a scrubbing-brush. And the thing was growing on him, like any other bad habit, hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second. Truly Nature is wonderful ! Even when a man has just shaven, his beard is still growing.

Mr. Barker's voice rose suddenly louder, punctuated by a peppery sneeze from Captain Nathan. *The door had swung slightly open !* Evidently the captain, who was examining his captive's bonds when the merchant hailed the *Susan-Mary*, had forgotten to lock it. With the promptness of a resourceful man who allows no chance to get by him, the pitifully unshaven pirate sat up in his berth, pivoted on his center of gravity, and stood unsteadily on his bound feet. The door swung wider . . . if Captain Nathan noticed it, the slight but possible hope of getting into the cabin and finding something to cut his bonds would vanish from the pirate's horizon. Three lightning-like hops carried him, a breathing bundle of grim

determination and hopeless iniquity, to the door ; and his nose was closing it when the scene in the cabin, with the captain's strong old back toward him, tempted the pirate to leave it just a crack open.

It was a scene worth looking at : Glue Across the Sea : East and West, the oldest and the youngest living civilizations (as a poet or statesman might have described it) united, at that moment, by the tenacious genius of Mr. Silas Pettigrew ! The Hong merchant, seven or eight Celestials standing respectfully behind him, sat on one side of the table ; Mr. Barker and Captain Gill on the other ; and between them a lighted candle, a broken plate, and a little bottle, with Mr. Pettigrew himself smiling on the label, that made the pirate curse inwardly when he saw it. As for the Chinamen, they looked so much alike that he soon lost interest in them. It was as if the Great Designer had been perfectly satisfied with His first Chinaman and had contented Himself thereafter with putting them on the market, like Mr. Pettigrew's fish glue, in different sizes.

"Wifee breakee plate," Mr. Barker was saying earnestly. "Wringee hands." He wrung his own by way of illustration. "Weepee — one — two — three hour. Husband, he comee. What can do makee wifee no weepee ? Smilee much. Feelee pocket. Findee one piece bottle Pettiglew's E Plusibus Ulum. Laughee he-he ! Laughee ha-ha !" And with a roguish, kindly expression that he must have believed made him look like a good-natured Chinese husband smoothing over a domestic crisis, Mr. Barker smoothed his own neat side-whiskers, picked up the broken plate, dipped the little brush, and annointed the edges.

"Lookee good chow-chow," said a stout, epicurean-looking Celestial in the background. "My likee tastee

he." He smacked his lips suggestively, but Mr. Barker paid no attention. He was too busy being a Chinese husband. And they might all have been his wives together, such was the interest with which they watched him hold the plate in the heat of the candle till the glue dried firmly and the miracle was accomplished.

Captain Gill sneezed and blew out the candle. He moved back his chair, and Bald Head promptly closed the door with his nose. From the other side he heard the voice of the captain, who knew the leisurely customs of the East better even than the supercargo himself. "Nuff sed for to-day, Mr. Barker. Supposey have gin and smoke-smoke top-side deckee?" Then the moving of chairs and the patter of soft-shod feet told the pirate that the captain's invitation had been accepted.

Bald Head waited. Silence, one of the few things that Pettigrew's could not mend, fell in the cabin and remained unbroken. He removed his restraining nose. The door swung open and he hopped into the cabin. However desperate his plan, it was evidently full-formed and ready, for he bent over the table, nosed the plate to the edge, and pushed it over. Surely if Captain Nathan's nose had got the pirate into this predicament, his own was doing its best to get him out again. The plate smashed into half a dozen pieces. Measuring the distance carefully with his eye, the pirate turned his back to the largest fragment, seated himself with a bump, toppled himself backward, got the ragged edge of the broken crockery under his bound wrists, poised the weight of his body on his heels and shoulder blades — and began sawing.

It was a slow, patient, laborious business, much like one of those wholesome exercises by which nowadays we try to reduce our flesh; but, unlike most of us who begin such an exercise, Bald Head kept it up for more than a

minute. You might have thought he meant to reduce all his superfluous flesh at once and have the job over with. Fifteen minutes — twenty — twenty-seven — and the wonderful fellow was still exercising : a month of it and, if he still lives, he will be thin enough for anybody. Fortunately, thirty seconds more parted the cord, and he smiled grimly through his bristles as he reached for his ankles.

“An’ now, cuss me !” muttered the pirate recklessly, as he felt of his chin with his thumb and forefinger, “I’m a-goin’ to shave. An’ wot’s more,” he added with a grim sense of humor, “I’m a-goin’ to cut this crop o’ chin-grass with th’ cap’n’s razor !”

Fortune was still with him. Behind the first door he opened was the captain’s stateroom and his tools for shaving. And a pitcher of water ! Hot water would have been better, but cold was good enough ; the pirate chuckled as he mixed his lather in the captain’s shaving-mug, marked “Nathan ” in gold letters, and transferred it generously to his wicked countenance. Already he felt better and more like himself. A little tune came softly through the foam :

*“We risks th’ noose, but wot’s th’ use
O’ swingin’ till ye’re swung ?” —*

as he began stropping the captain’s razor.

Afternoon was waning but there was still plenty of light to shave by ; and few processes are better for thinking. Byron, it will be remembered, used to compose some of his happiest and most questionable verse while he shaved ; Bald Head, unfortunately, had something more practical to think about, and the more he thought about it the less he got anywhere.

His thoughts were clear enough. First, it would be

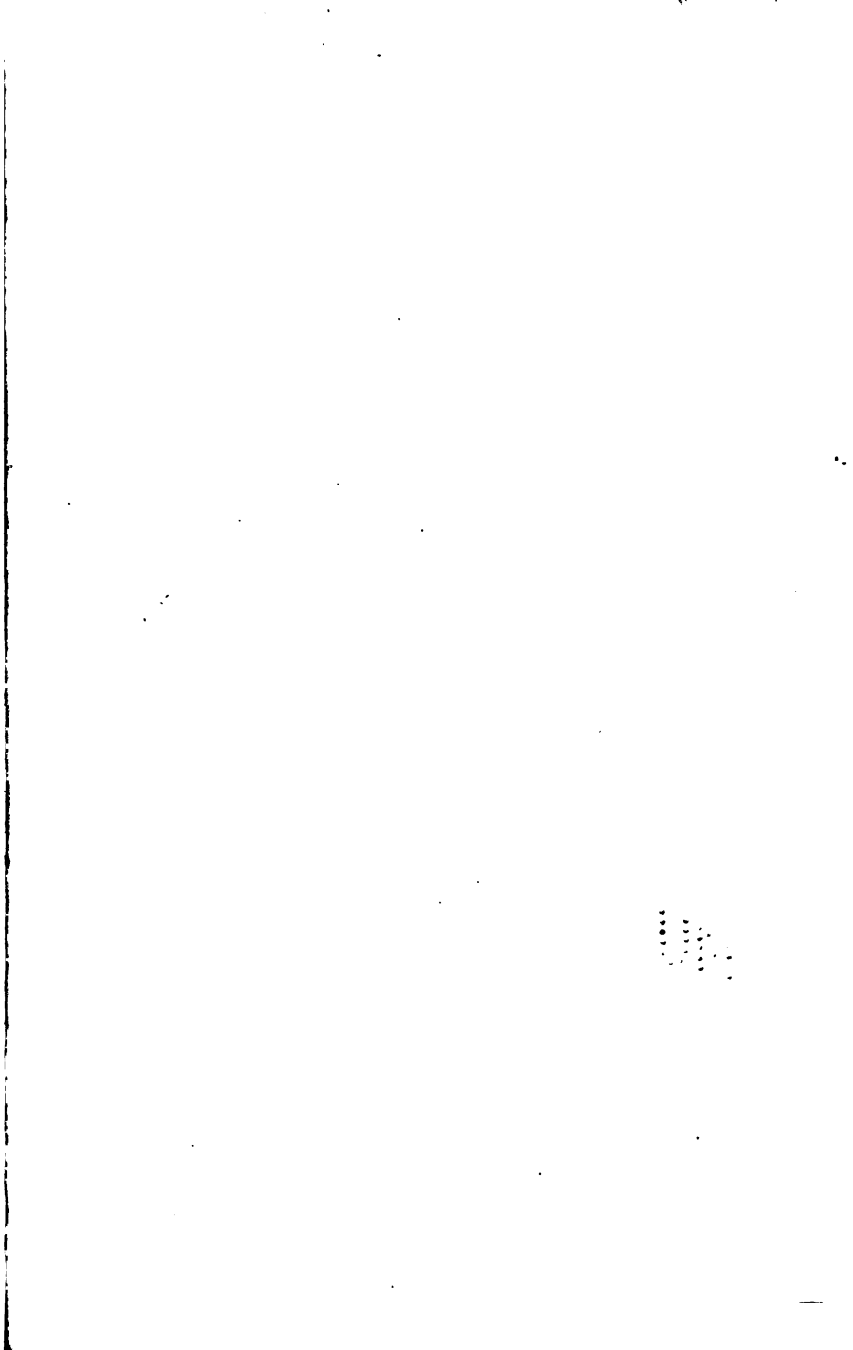
unwise to appear on deck before dark ; second, it would be unwise to stay in this cabin until dark, for at any moment Captain Nathan was likely to come down and take a look at him ; third, now that he had a razor he could kill the captain ; fourth, while he was doing it the rest of the crew would recapture him ; fifth, now that he had a razor he could rush on deck, carve his way to the side, and leap overboard ; sixth, if he leaped overboard in such a public and sensational way he would attract too much attention from other vessels.

He powdered himself with the captain's talcum and saw plainly — it was as clear as crystal — that he didn't know what to do next and must do it immediately. *And something living had come down the ladder and was now in the cabin !*

Razor in hand the pirate stepped softly to the door of the stateroom. A Chinaman, his splendid pig-tail hanging straight under his funny Chinese hat, stood at the table. He had taken up the bottle of E Pluribus Unum ; dipped the little brush ; was about to treat himself to a generous mouthful of that honey-appearing substance. Involuntarily, moved perhaps by that better nature which is dormant in the worst of us, Bald Head uttered a startled warning. "Ef ye put that stuff in yer mouth, John," he hissed from the doorway, "ye'll wish ye hadn't."

The Chinaman turned and stared at him. He was about the same size as the pirate ; the same portly, epicurean Celestial, in fact, who had already expressed a yearning desire to taste the E Pluribus. And he was not to be stopped. His native blandness gave him the air of a large child caught in the jam closet ; but he evidently decided that the interrupter was not his mother. He shook his head, and his pig-tail waved gently.

"My no savvy you talkee," he said politely. "My





"YOU MAKEE SOUND — ME CUTTEE!"

tastee." And, having spilled some of the delicious stuff on the table, he dipped the brush for a fresh sample.

"You no tastee," said Bald Head firmly ; and his evil eyes lighted, one after the other, with a lurid glitter of hope and determination. "*You no shoutee!*" he added, with a grim emphasis unmistakable in any language. "You makee sound — me cuttee!" He held up the razor significantly ; and as the Chinaman stood motionless with surprise and horror, Bald Head leaped upon him like a fat panther.

Chingqua, the Hong merchant, sat contentedly under his blue silk umbrella and talked amiable pidgin-English with Captain Gill and Mr. Barker. To Western eyes he looked a good deal like a live lemon, and both his hosts wished he would go home to his crate and let them get supper. But there was no go home in him. There he sat, drinking gin, smoking cheroots, and shooting off an occasional firecracker ; and apparently nothing would start him till he had finished both his bunch and his bottle. Along the river, China, always celebrating something, was whooping it up spasmodically with gongs and firecrackers.

It was a typical late afternoon in China, or as near that mysterious empire as any foreigner was allowed to penetrate. Treaty relations with the West were not yet established ; from the deck they could see the rectangular row of commercial buildings, each flying a different flag, that were the only foothold of the barbarian on the shore of the Flowery Kingdom. Beyond lay China and those innumerable homes in which Mr. Barker hoped that Pettigrew's *E Pluribus Unum* Fish Glue would soon become a household necessity.

Here and there a queer, outlandish vessel from France,

England, Portugal, or America mingled with the dignified Chinese junks or lighter "fast crabs" and "scrambling dragons;" and the big, bright eyes, sensibly painted on the bows of each Chinese craft to see where it was going, seemed to twinkle with amusement at the oddity of this foreign-devil shipping. Now and then a cracker popped cheerily on board the *Susan-Mary*, where the Chinamen who had accompanied the merchant fraternized condescendingly with the weird but interesting crew of that quaintly amusing vessel.

One Chinaman, fatter and perhaps more poetic than the others, stood apart and contemplated the river, curiously studying a British bark that was preparing to drop down-stream when the tide was favorable.

"Speakin' of that glue and th' way th' stuff sticks," said Captain Nathan gloomily, "me spinnee one piece yarn. You savvy pilate-man?"

The merchant nodded. Long experience in business with barbarian merchants had made him a lemon of wide general intelligence. "Pilate-man robbee ship," he replied, lighting a firecracker with the end of his cheroot and watching it explode in the air as he threw it overboard. "Pilate-man catchee you, makee you walkee plankum top-side deckee."

"Sailee China Sea," continued Captain Nathan. He sneezed, swore at himself for sneezing, though he couldn't help doing it, and waved his hand toward the south to indicate the *Susan-Mary's* former position. "Pilate-man chasee we. No have gun; what can do savee ship? Spreadee stickum top-side deckee. Pilate-man jumpee. Pilate-man stickee. Pilate-man no can get up. We catchee that pilate-man. Gottee he now hind-side cabin." And he jerked his thumb toward the companion-way.

"My likee see he!" exclaimed the merchant excitedly.

"And so ye shall," said the captain, getting up suddenly like a man whose social duties have made him forget something more important. "I ain't seen th' bald-headed devil-fish m'self these three hours. You walkee this side deckee —"

Followed by the curious merchant and the indifferent supercargo, he led the way to the cabin; and so contagious is any overwhelming curiosity that nearly every other Chinaman on deck pattered inquisitively after them. Only the one fat Chinaman remained, staring pensively over the bulwarks.

It was now almost dark in the cabin. The little group of Celestials filled the hatch and shut out the twilight. In that semidarkness they could all hear a low, muffled moaning, inarticulate and miserable — the kind of a noise that makes your pig-tail stiffen in spite of you. But Captain Gill, lighting the cabin lanterns, chuckled with cruel pleasure. That sound was music to him. Despite a rather impetuous temper, he was (as they used to say) a man who wouldn't harm a fly — but that was because he knew so little about them. Nowadays we know almost too much about flies: we are all willing and even anxious to harm them; and this was exactly the attitude of Captain Nathan Gill toward pirates.

So far it had grieved him deeply that nothing he could do had been able to break the sullen, indomitable spirit of his vile but heroic captive. Now, he told himself pleasantly, that spirit was broken. And it had broken at the best possible moment. If it had broken before, Bald Head would have kept him awake at night. If it had broken later, there would have been much less satisfaction in exhibiting him to this interested merchant; it would have been like exhibiting a stuffed pirate instead of a live one —

and yet not exactly that either, for a genuine stuffed pirate would have been a good deal of an unnatural curiosity. There he lay broken ; and it surprised the captain as the light of the cabin flooded the stateroom, to see how completely in his tortured writhings he had managed to cover the pieces with his blanket.

" You want look-see pilate," said the captain proudly. " There he be, cuss him ! " And with a deft, quick movement he at once uncovered his captive and tried in vain to cover him up again.

" He no pilate ! " shrieked Chingqua in horrified indignation. " You no catchee pilate — you catchee Hop-Sing ! "

There are some moments — fortunately they come but seldom — when an unexpected horror spurs the mind to incredible and yet useless activity. Even before that exclamation, even before he learned the name of what a humorist might perhaps call the surprise party under Bald Head's blanket, Captain Gill had *known* definitely that it was not Bald Head himself. It was about the same size, bound in the same fashion, and had been rather clumsily gagged with a purple kerchief — the very kerchief in fact, that had encircled the pirate's cranium when he triumphantly leaped the bulwarks and sat down in the *E Pluribus Unum*.

But it wore only such undergarments as were then fashionable among well-undressed Chinamen ; and the thing about it that had first caught the eye of Captain Nathan, and made him try in vain to reverse the blanket and cover the horror up again, was a short, ragged tuft of hair isolated on its otherwise clean-shaven head. *There was the real catastrophe !* Bald Head, the Pirate, had cut off the queue of a Chinaman — the name made no difference — and Captain Gill well knew, unless he could pro-

duce Bald Head to answer for it, that the entire outraged and insulted Chinese Empire would hold him and Mr. Barker personally responsible.

Together they unfastened the prisoner, hopelessly apologizing in pidgin-English ; and behind them, little as they could follow the unadulterated tongue, they knew that Chingqua only restrained his followers by pointing out how completely these foreign devils were in their power, and how little, comparatively, they would suffer if they were immediately torn to pieces. As for Hop-Sing, his freed hands leaped to his pigtail and his freed feet danced with rage and agony as he found how small a fraction was left of it.

Outside the cabin twilight was merging imperceptibly into moonlit night. Chinese lanterns, like many-colored, smaller moons, dotted the river. The tide had turned ; the wind, holding steady down-stream, set the lanterns dancing. It was the edge of China. Beyond that edge no foreigner had yet penetrated, except to be executed ; and this time to-morrow, as Mr. Barker and Captain Gill realized together, would very likely find them on the other side of it.

" We no cuttee, you savvy," explained Mr. Barker ; and " Pilate-man, he cuttee," explained Captain Gill at the same moment. " You catchee he, hangee he all-same Chinese fashion." They kept their splendid Anglo-Saxon dignity, but their words ran together. " Hop-Sing loseum pig-tail. We velly solly. We payum t'ousan' dolla', makee pig-tail all-same right again ! "

Chingqua bowed politely, and with him every other Chinaman, even Hop-Sing himself in his pathetic but fashionable Chinese underwear. It was an awful politeness. Now that they had recovered from the first shock they remembered their manners ; but to Captain Nathan

it seemed as if the whole teeming population of China, men, women, and children, were all bowing to him together. It was not even ironical. It seemed to say simply :

"Sir, we are always polite, but there are times when we are also absolutely merciless — and this time is one of them."

"T'ousan' dolla' no payum pig-tail," said Chingqua gently. "Walkee now Cantonside. Come back to-morrow. You catchee pilate-man, we takee he, choppee head. You no catchee pilate-man we takee you, choppee head. No makee glow pig-tail, makee feel some ha-ha."

He led his followers, each bowing again with the same bland, heart-breaking courtesy, up the companionway ; and as they all reached the deck Captain Nathan's keen eye swept the surface of the twilight Canton. The *Susan-Mary*, as if she felt their danger, tugged down-stream at her anchor ; and some distance aft a funny Chinese hat floated rapidly toward the faraway mouth of the river. That was all — just a funny Chinese hat ! Bald Head had vanished, probably swum ashore, more probably managed to get himself picked up by the British bark that had been getting under way when the captain led his guest to the cabin. At that thought Captain Gill sneezed bitterly, and his brows contracted so fiercely that his cap moved forward and seemed, all by itself, to be returning the bow of the Hong merchant as his boat moved shoreward with its pathetic, lightly clad, and queueless passenger.

Now the boat vanished among the anchored shipping, and afar off the lights twinkled in the Foreign Colony — but there was no help in those lights for Captain Nathan and Mr. Barker if China demanded their lives as an inadequate and perfunctory return for Hop-Sing's pig-tail. Through the companion came the sound of the cabin-boy

at last setting the table for supper ; but there was now no joy in it. Through the same opening came the natty but anxious figure of Mr. Barker, who had been trying in vain to change the current of his thoughts by changing his clothes for supper.

" I suppose, Captain Gill," said the supercargo thoughtfully, " that human life is more important than a cargo of glue."

" I've been studyin' that very question, Mr. Barker," replied Captain Gill gravely, " and so far as I see, sir, the glue is out of it. A man needs a head to sell glue — so there ye are, sir. It's a difficult passage to th' mouth o' th' river without a pilot, and that's where they think they've got us. What I'd had it in mind to do," he added regretfully, " was to take a hot bath and turn in early. But with a fair wind and tide — God bless my soul ! — I think we can jest about make the Chiny Sea by daybreak."

Another infant day had been born, and now the *Susan-Mary* had passed the Chinese fort at the mouth of Canton River ; and the teeming population of India — such were the occasional vicissitudes of commerce in the early 1830's — had become the most likely market for Pettigrew's E Pluribus Unum Fish Glue. Mr. Barker and Captain Nathan had settled that question immediately after getting up anchor.

If losing your head seems reasonably certain to incapacitate you from selling your glue in one market, the one sensible thing to do is to keep your head and take your glue to another. And even if Bald Head were captured, it was by no means unlikely, considering the seriousness of the offense and the sensitiveness of the Chinese Empire, that Mr. Barker, Captain Gill, and perhaps the whole

crew of the *Susan-Mary* would be politely but firmly executed as accessories.

Meantime there was no danger whatever that Bald Head would be captured by any Chinese official. He was still with them, and Captain Gill, except for his cold, would undoubtedly have suspected it. Bald Head had, in fact, come up from the cabin ; kept away from the other Chinamen (for he intelligently guessed, however they looked to him, that Chinamen *did not* all look alike to each other) ; and made his way to the bulwarks. Casually observed, he was rather a striking and handsome Celestial, for Hop Sing's garments fitted him nicely, and Hop-Sing's pigtail, thanks to Pettigrew's famous product, hung down behind from under Hop-Sing's funny Chinese hat in a convincing and lifelike manner.

But the harbor was still too lively for any thoughtful refugee to attract attention by jumping into it ; and, as he now realized, it is one thing to look like a Chinaman and another to talk like him. And the Chinese Empire terrified him ! There it lay, as far as the eye could see and then some (as we nowadays say to express infinity) — a Gigantic Maw patiently waiting to digest him ; and, even with the captain's razor up his Chinese sleeve, Bald Head felt himself powerless to do anything but kick feebly while he was going down.

Even if he got to the Foreign Colony, Captain Gill would soon be looking for him, and it would be a case of out of the Colony into the Gigantic Maw ! And he must act immediately !

From the corner of his eye he saw the captain, the supercargo, and the whole troop of Celestials disappear into the cabin — and yet, until it was darker, Bald Head dared not leave the deck of the vessel. He looked round the deck keenly. Standing in the waist was a large hogshead

partly covered with an old sail ; he strolled toward it, passed a couple of sailors with a fine, easy affectation of Chinese dignity, and peeked under the canvas.

The hogshead was empty ; and the spectacle of a British vessel dropping down the river had drawn the sailors to the stern of the *Susan-Mary*. He would be safe there until dark, unless a search were made for him. He stepped to the nearest bulwark, tossed Hop-Sing's funny Chinese hat overboard — and in another ten seconds he had climbed into the hogshead and pulled the canvas over the top of it.

Darkness settled about him like a mantle, penetrated, after a considerable interval, by the familiar creak and clank of a lifting anchor. Anxious as he was to leave Canton, he had no desire to travel, either in stateroom, hold, or hogshead, aboard the *Susan-Mary*. But for an interminable time — he heard the bells striking and knew it was only three hours — the sounds of movement on deck kept him from looking out of his hogshead.

Then the deck at last quieted, and the moon looked in at him as he gently moved the canvas and peered over the edge of his hiding-place. He could not see the helmsman, but a sneeze told him that Captain Nathan was himself steering the vessel — and now was perhaps as good a time as any to murder him, grasp the helm, run the vessel aground, and escape in the darkness. Gripping the razor between his teeth, he placed his strong, wicked hands on the rim of the hogshead and started to lift himself lightly out of it.

But nothing happened — nothing whatever, except that his eyes popped with surprise and the veins swelled in his forehead. He remained standing in the hogshead, his feet on the bottom, his hands on the edge — and no human effort could alter his position. Something down

there in the hogshead seemed to be holding him firmly by the soles of his feet.

He felt the inner side with his finger — a hard, glazed surface. Now he knew what had happened. Fool! Idiot! Jackass! Dolt! Simpleton! *He had got into the very hogshead that had been emptied of its E Pluribus Unum to prepare for his original reception!* Most of the glue that remained on the sides had dried since his arrival, but enough had been left in the bottom, almost but not quite dry, to receive the soles of his feet when he climbed into it, and now time had finished the hardening process.

Try as he might, it was impossible for the pirate to extricate his feet from Hop-Sing's sandals, for, not knowing how to put them on like a Chinaman, he had lashed them with rope like a sailor; nor could he manage to reach past his own circumference and cut the rope with the captain's razor. When he sat down there was just room for him with his arms folded.

The moon set, and left a solitary star to herald the dawn. The captain still had the helm; now and again the low voice of a man at the bow showed that the old seaman was taking no chances with the unknown passage. Twice the *Susan-Mary* nearly ran aground and escaped almost by a miracle; but dawn showed the fort at the mouth of the river. She got past it slowly, for the tide was no longer with her; but apparently they slept sound in the fort. By eight o'clock the fort was well astern and the *Susan-Mary's* course had been laid for Calcutta. A chain of small islands lay just off the starboard bow, and once past them China would be no more than a feverish memory.

Captain Nathan yawned and sneezed. He called a seaman to take the helm, stretched himself mightily, and spoke to his first officer on his way to the cabin.

"Mr. Tarr," he said, "I'm goin' to turn in for eight good hours, and afore I do I'm goin' to take a hot bath on a empty stomach an' bust up this infunnel cold. She's got a hold on me, I don't deny, sir — but any cold as thinks she's goin' to settle on me without a struggle don't know th' patient! So ef you'll just have cookie swab out that hogshead amidships an' fill it with bilin' water, I'll take a leetle dose o' quinine and be back on deck in about ten minutes."

The words reached the hogshead and, unless the reader has been glued into a hogshead under even approximately the same conditions, it will be impossible for him to realize the feelings of the man inside of it. The word "perplexity" fails. The word "horror" is without meaning. The hogshead itself, if any one had happened to look at it, became so profoundly still that it would have attracted attention by its very immobility; beside it any other hogshead would have looked like a ballet-girl.

Ignorant as he was of experimental physics, Bald Head knew that he and Captain Nathan could not occupy that hogshead at the same time; and willing as he might be to get out of it and make room for the captain, he had been trying all night to get out of it and was now painfully discouraged. And this glue was warranted not to soften in boiling water! Ordinarily he was a man who could decide quickly, but here, any way he looked at it, there was little or nothing for the most decisive character to take hold of.

Presently he felt the canvas coming off the top of the hogshead; sunshine flooded him; and then a bucket of steaming water, fortunately somewhat cooled by its trip from the galley.

"————— !!!!!!!" said the pirate smartly, and stood up in the hogshead.

A single glance showed him the cook stooping for his

second bucket ; another the grim figure of Captain Nathan wrapped in a blanket and sneezing voluptuously as he emerged from the cabin ; but as the pirate's eye ranged from cook to captain it included also a small, rakish-looking black schooner just appearing from the lee of a neighboring island. And his quick mind, unhampered by his immovable feet, told him what that schooner was and what she was after !

Dodging the British war-vessel among the islands, the schooner had doubled on her tracks and laid in wait for the returning *Susan-Mary*. He could even catch the gleam of red whiskers as a man in the bow lifted a telescope ; and hope lifted his soul as he made another desperate effort to lift his feet.

But man and hogshead were still one and inseparable.

And he had lost the captain's razor ! Dropped it when the hot water struck him ! Felt it, all too late, slide gently over his stomach as he rose from the hogshead !

As for Captain Nathan Gill, the indignation of any man at finding a Chinaman in his hot bath was swallowed up by the savage satisfaction with which he recognized the Chinaman he had found there. He seized the second bucket of steaming water from the cook and swung it backward with the evident intention of jamming it forcibly over the bald head of his enemy.

Quick as he was, however, he emptied his bucket only over the unfeeling bottom of the hogshead itself. Bald Head had leaned violently forward and capsized his prison ; his strong hands flattened on the deck ; his strong legs lifted the hogshead ; the whole affair trembled this way and that, but moved quickly like an infant hogshead just learning to walk, straight at the captain. And at the same moment a gun boomed to windward, and a cannon-ball dropped so near the *Susan-Mary* that the cold salt water



LIKE AN INFANT HOGSHEAD JUST LEARNING TO WALK,
IT MOVED STRAIGHT AT THE CAPTAIN

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spattered the captain and made him sneeze more violently than ever.

Captain Nathan retreated, nor was he ever ashamed of it. A man in a blanket is no match for a hogshead evidently grimly determined to fall on him ; nor, as the captain bitterly admitted, is glue at long range any match for cannon. Even as he sprang to the wheel, his eye searched the horizon. Far to the east — thank Heaven for British obstinacy ! — the *Spitfire* was still cruising in search of the pirates who had eluded her. He threw the wheel over, pointed the *Susan-Mary* due east. And as the obedient brig heeled under the sudden shift of canvas, Bald Head and his hogshead ran involuntarily down the sloping deck, struck the lee bulwark, somersaulted twice in the air, and disappeared into the China Sea together.

Captain Nathan, looking over his shoulder, saw them come to the surface, now right side up and again upside down, and every time they came right side up the voice of the pirate shouted lustily for assistance. Then they steadied ; and a hogshead, apparently with arms and a head, swam laboriously toward the approaching schooner.

Fifteen minutes later on the deck of the schooner eight savage but delighted men surrounded a ninth whom they had just cut out of a hogshead. Bad men as they were, they had their own kind of innocent humor, and the more they examined the rescued rascal's pigtail the more they admired it.

"Now here's a feller," said the man with the yellow mustaches, twirling them gleefully, "as allus wanted to have hair on his head, messmates. An' now as he's got it, cuss me fer a merman if he ain't onhappy 'cos it won't come off !"

THE REFINING INFLUENCE OF CAPTAIN KIDD

ON the dismantled hulk of a Liverpool-to-New-York packet, slowly sinking in mid-Atlantic after the August storm of 1829, a fat baby played contentedly with ten little pink toes. It was a male baby. Spars and rigging, providentially piled up around the open door of a deck cabin, kept him from rolling very far in any direction ; and the ocean, sobbing in long, tired swells, rocked him as if in an enormous cradle. Above his head a vast white cloud outlined itself against the blue sky in the shape of a gigantic Santa Claus. Beyond the cabin, from which this cheerful baby had doubtless crawled, a solitary cow coasted monotonously across the quarter-deck, back and forth from port to starboard with the motion of the broken vessel. Except for a small, rakish-looking schooner, rapidly coming up to windward, cow and baby were alone on the ocean.

The cloud Santa Claus slowly turned himself into a camel with five humps, and then into five humps without a camel. The schooner drew nearer — near enough for the cow, had she been at all sensitized to such impressions, to have been seriously worried by the eight or nine fierce faces idly watching her from the fore-castle. Rarely, if ever, could this or any other cow have seen a more contentedly de-

praved or hopelessly dishonest company, for any one of them might easily have traveled as Horrible Example with a lecturer on the entertaining topic of "Crime and Physiognomy." Possibly, however, there was some good in them, and the cow discovered it, for every time the motion of the hulk slid her to starboard, she projected her gentle features over the bulwarks and sent a long, pathetic *moo-o-o-o* floating to windward.

"Wot that cow wants, messmates," said a man on the schooner, twiddling his tarry fingers familiarly toward the distressed bovine, "be to have some merry farmer boy a-milkin' of her, pore critter! When I were a younger man than I be now, I learned to milk 'em, an' I loved to do it."

He was a round, powerful fellow, whose small eyes, negligible chin, and long, bridgeless nose gave him somewhat the aspect of an intelligent but morally untrustworthy pig; and now he raised first one tanned fist and then the other in expressive pantomime. "Squirt — squirt! Squirt — squirt!" he continued enthusiastically. "An' then there's a pooty leetle tinkle in th' cussed milk-pail, an' th' milk's a-comin'."

"An' wot's th' use o' th' silly stuff when ye've got it — squirt — squirt?" asked another, peering good-naturedly over a magnificent hedge of bushy red whiskers, behind which he was evidently smoking a short pipe. "Fit fer feemal women an' leetle innercent babies like as ain't got no digestions. But wot's th' use on it to a growed man, Piggy — to say nothin' o' an able-bodied pirut?"

"Feemal gals," carelessly remarked a tall, graceful fellow, giving a knowing twirl to the long, handsome yellow mustaches that almost hid his impulsive but wicked mouth, "uses of it to take a bath in, a-splashin' an' a-laffin' jest like we do when we goes a-swimmin'. It gives 'em

wot ye might call a creamy complexion," he added, and gazed dreamily at the far horizon. "Creamy all over."

"Th' thing to do with milk, Whisker," said the first speaker, wetting his lips appreciatively, "be to mix it with rum. A lot o' good rum an' a leetle o' that milk —"

Contagious, and even sensible, as this enthusiasm may seem to the reader, nobody caught it on board the schooner.

"Gen'lemen all an' merry companions," said the red-whiskered man abruptly, "stand ye by t' heave to th' *Tender Polly* an' run up th' Jolly Rover business-like. Lootin' o' an abandoned vessel be a small job, gentlemen all an' merry companions, but we might jest as well do it proper an' ship-shape." And now the cow, again bumping disconsolately against the starboard bulwarks, saw the schooner come gracefully into the wind and heard a harsh but happy chorus from the cabin into which her corrupt but able seamen had immediately vanished :

*"Th' good ole man, he walks th' plank ;
His step is firm but slow.
Ho, boys, ho !
He hits the ocean with a spank."*

And as the gay yet gloomy chanty hit the peaceful summer air with almost the same disciplinary abruptness, nine pairs of sea boots rattled up the ladder ; and, one after another, nine fierce heads, each tied up in a kerchief as if the owner suffered from nervous headache, shot through the companionway. But, headache or no headache, they giggled horribly as the brainless skull of their profession fluttered at the topmast, and their brutal voices outraged nature :

*"His wife an' leetle daughter,
They march above th' water,*

*And in, kerplunk ! they go.
Ho boys, ho ! ”*

as they pulled lustily toward the helpless packet.

Sinking by the bow as she was, they came aboard over the bowsprit, and the doors of all the passenger cabins stood piteously open before them. With nine wild cries the unresisted pirates sprang into the nearest cabin. But hardly had they begun their professional labors when they all paused and listened. Silence, unbroken by the countless voices of the rigging that tell the progress of a living vessel, hung heavy on this dead body of a ship, waiting for the slow ocean to complete her burial. Even the cow had stopped mooing. And then, as they held their breath and listened, a tiny, whimpering, wailing cry startled them all together into a cold, uncomfortable perspiration. It was a sound that every one of them had heard before, a sound that every living man and woman *has* heard — and yet a sound that every one of these vile and undomestic men had long since forgotten. Now it seemed to pervade the entire vessel — and again the silence of the ocean graveyard seemed to swallow it forever. But terrifying as it was, the red-whiskered leader presently recovered something of his customary indomitable courage.

“ Wotever it be,” he said firmly, “ I ain’t afeard o’ anything as moans an’ whimpers by daylight — but I can’t loot comfortable-like till I knows wot’s a-doin’ of it.” And with these brave words he drew his cutlass, wiped the sudden perspiration from his evil forehead, and led them back to the deck.

The noise continued — at first intermittently, and then in a steady whimper, ending with a note of indignation. Any baby expert, or student of our own splendid modern science of psychogenesis, would have known it at once for

one of the four distinct cries of infancy. But none of these fierce, unprincipled, and (presumably) unmarried men was a baby expert. They advanced bravely but cautiously, ready, if the sight they were about to see should prove too much for them, to spring backward and leap over the bulwarks. Instinctively, too, — which shows how youthful training remains forever deep down in every human bosom — they advanced on tiptoe, past the open doors of several cabins whose sad disorder testified to the pathetic haste in which the lady and gentleman passengers had left them, until a tangle of spars and rigging barred further progress. The sound proceeded from behind the accidental rampart ; and one after another they climbed the roof of the cabin and peered over into the enclosure.

For a long minute the nine pirates stared down at the baby, and the equally astonished baby stared up at the nine pirates. Then the flaming red whiskers of their brave, abominable leader caught his undivided attention. In the full glare of the summer sun they blazed like a conflagration, and the fresh sea breeze imparted to them just the gentle, waving motion best calculated to attract the observation of a thoughtful infant. He smiled and wiggled his chubby legs admiringly. Presently his smile widened and he extended his chubby arms straight toward the surprised and — to his own amazement — delighted pirate.

Never in all his life, or at least since he could remember, had anything so sweet and innocent stretched out its chubby arms to Red Whisker. Little he knew, of course, that the child was chiefly interested in the unusual spectacle presented by his waving whiskers, and that the event, had one been keeping a baby biography, would have been appropriately entered : “ Eleventh (or twelfth) month — Baby took notice of a pair of red whiskers waving in the



THE FLAMING RED WHISKERS OF THEIR BRAVE, ABOMINABLE LEADER CAUGHT THE BABY'S UNDIVIDED ATTENTION. HE SMILED AND WIGGLED HIS CHUBBY LEGS ADMIRINGLY. PRESENTLY HIS SMILE WIDENED AND HE EXTENDED HIS CHUBBY ARMS STRAIGHT TOWARD THE SURPRISED AND — TO HIS OWN AMAZEMENT — DELIGHTED PIRATE

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mind." Had the whiskers been hanging on a clothesline they would have been equally effective ; but their flattered owner took the whole matter personally. Evidently, he thought, this baby understood and appreciated him — his *hungry* baby ; for the sudden warming of his wicked heart was in itself a primary course in psychogenesis. He leaned far forward, anxiously upside down, and examined the cabin. Yes, there was the little creature's cradle, upset in the corner ; and there beside it, recognizable by its serpentine rubber tube, was the baby's bottle.

With a great sigh of relief the pirate straightened himself up and turned to his comrades ; and on either side of him — such is the hypnotism of a baby's smile — he found them twiddling their foolish fingers in clumsy efforts to attract the baby's attention.

"Wot we've allus needed, messmates," said Red Whisker solemnly, "were a leetle baby as we might adopt cozy-like an' bring up fer a pirut. Piggy, ole feller, pump th' pooty cow an' we'll fill his bottle."

On a small, tropical island the pirate Piggy sat milking the cow Maude. Beyond them the last rays of the hot, declining sun stretched a long, grotesque shadow of min-
 led cow and pirate toward the wooded end of the pasture, where a few birds still twittered and chirped sleepily. Then the sun went down altogether, and a tender crescent moon silvered the pretty scene of rustic industry. Had Rosa Bonheur been there she would have run for her paint-box.

Piggy the Pirate finished milking, wiped his hands — oh ! horror — on the slack of his breeches, spanked Maude good-naturedly on what would have been the same place the cows wore them, and glanced slyly toward the dark

outline of a palisade some hundred yards distant. No eye watched from the rampart. He took a stout quarter-mouthful of milk from the pail, a pinch of sugar and nutmeg from one pocket, and a stout three-quarters mouthful of rum from a flask in the other, mixed these various ingredients with a pleasant gurgling sound in his capacious mouth, and swallowed the compound with closed eyes and a wistfully sensuous expression of satisfaction that made him look more like a pig than ever. Evidently he would have liked another, but he shook his head gloomily, picked up his milk-pail, and moved slowly toward the palisade.

Sixty-odd times Piggy had milked Maude, for it was now middle September, more than a month since the ferocious residents of Nonesuch Island had adopted the baby. But no men, however ferocious, can adopt a baby without a certain, at first inappreciable, softening of their savage natures. The effect of babies on burglars is well known to all readers of polite literature — and the effect of a baby on pirates is exactly similar. Gone now were the long bright evenings of happy debauchery in the cozy sitting-room.

To put the matter plainly (and so Piggy was putting it to himself as he set the milk-pail carefully in the kitchen sink), these men were ceasing to be pirates and rapidly becoming grandmothers. Bad as they were, it began to look as if the refining influence of this tender child was going to be too much for them — and Piggy was getting sick of it. If it had been simply a matter of milking the cow Maude (as he had himself named her) and sharing with Captain Kidd (as the pirates had named the baby), he would have used his share for milk punch and thought no more about it. But what the precious baby didn't drink they used to bathe him in (Yellow Mustaches had suggested this use) and there was none of it left.

Meantime, the sitting-room lamp burned yellow in a haze of tobacco smoke, and a sound, unlike music, yet perhaps more like music than anything else, rose fitfully where Yellow Mustaches revolved nervously on the stool before the melodeon and occasionally hit that innocent and helpless instrument with his cruel forefinger. Each time he revolved he turned his dashing but detestable eyes almost beseechingly toward the five happy states who surrounded the marble-topped table and played with the baby — and anybody might have seen that he wanted to play the melodeon and only waited for an invitation. But nobody invited him. Presently he remained stationary, and, as he raised his voice, they all knew by experience that he was singing a lullaby :

"Potatoes have eyes, but can not see

Like you an' me,

Bay-be ! Bay-be !

Corn has an ear, but can not hear

Like you an' me,

My bay-be dear !

Shoes have a tongue, but can not talk.

Th' chair has legs, but can not walk.

Th' fish has scales, but ne'er is he

A Gro-cer-y Man,

Bay-be ! Bay-be !

"Hyenas laugh, but not with glee

Like you an' me,

Bay-be ! Bay-be !

Tacks have a head, but can not think

Like you an' me,

My bay-be — pink !

Oysters have beds, but have no sheets.

Th' whale in school no — "

"Yaller Mustaches," said Red Whisker severely, "stow th' pooty ditty. Ye're a-scarin' th' baby."

Yellow Mustaches got up suddenly — as what musician wouldn't under the same circumstances? — and his mustaches quivered with a manly effort to conceal how the words hurt him. Willingly would he have killed Red Whisker — but he felt an awful premonition that he would burst into tears before he could do it; and without a word he gulped a sob back into his throat, seized his hat, and left the room hurriedly, slamming the door behind him. They heard his hasty steps crunch on the gravel and then, after one of those strained, uncomfortable pauses that always follow such an episode in a general company, the remaining pirates endeavored to resume their occupations as if nothing had happened. But two of them, sitting apart over a game of checkers, exchanged meaning glances.

"Wot I likes about th' leetle feller," said a man at the table, nodding his head ingenuously in a silly effort to attract the baby's attention to his large brass nose-ring. "be to see th' way he grows, bless his cussed leetle soul. Fat as butter an' lively as a ——— ——— !!! ——— ——— ———"

"'Sh-h-h-h, ole feller!" said Red Whisker warningly. "Wot's words fer piruts ain't words fer babies — 'specially when they're just a-learnin' how to converse like. Naughty man! Naughty man!" he added, this time addressing Captain Kidd, and poking his huge forefinger at his thoughtless companion.

"Goo-o-o-o," said Captain Kidd emphatically. "Nja nja dada hatta damma damma dada dada meene meene goo-o-o-o damma damma dada." And he pointed his chubby finger at Piggy, who now stood in the kitchen doorway.

"Wot he means, messmates," explained Red Whisker

proudly, "be as he knows as how Piggy has been a-milkin' Maude, an' how it's time fer old Uncle Whisker to fill his leetle bottle. There ain't much as he don't onderstand."

"He'll make a fine pirut," said Nose Ring, speaking slowly and without profanity.

"Ef we makes a pirut of him at all," said Red Whisker thoughtfully. "I've been a-thinkin' of it over, an' th' more I thinks th' more I wonders whether piracy be th' proper job fer him. Wot I says is as we'll have to give th' leetle feller a chance at bein' President o' th' United States. When I was about his age, or mebbe a leetle older," he added, "I used to think some o' bein' president m'self, but I drifted off into piracy, as young fellers will, an' there were th' end on't. You jest let him play with yer pooty ornymint, Nose Ring, while I goes to th' kitchen an' fixes of his bottle."

But the infant, with that gay capriciousness which is the charm of babyhood, had quite lost interest in the shining nose-ring. His round eyes turned beseechingly toward the checker-players. Whether it was the fine bald head of one or the neat mutton-chop whiskers of the other that had now attracted him, they both felt him looking at them and made a desperate effort to play checkers in spite of it.

"Wot he wants now," said Nose Ring disgustedly, "be to play with Bald Head. Come here, ole feller, an' let th' baby play with ye."

But already the two checker-players had seized their hats and slammed the door as they hurriedly left the sitting-room. Far down the beach beyond the open gate of the palisade they saw a solitary figure sitting at the very edge of the ocean; and without a word they moved rapidly in that direction and sat down beside Yellow Mustaches.

For some minutes the three pirates sat in a row and

stared at the ocean. The weeping of a disappointed and angry Captain Kidd came to them distantly, and, like the hyena, they laughed without glee as they listened.

"Cuss him!" said Yellow Mustaches. "Wot's th' use o' havin' a voice an' a Mellow Odeon ef ye can't play an' sing on it? Here we be, a hull month sence Red Whisker persuaded of us to adopt that cussed leetle Captain Kidd — an' every time I tries to sing him a ditty, he ups an' hollers."

"Cuss him!" said Bald Head viciously. "Ye can't git interested in a game o' checkers no more on this island without havin' th' leetle ediot spile th' game jest acos he wants to put th' checkers on yer pore bald head an' see 'em slide off."

"H'I thought ye might be a-pilin' up trouble when h'I see ye a-teachin' that silly gime to 'im," said the pirate with the mutton-chop whiskers. "Not as h'it weren't a pooty game in h'its way," he added quickly, evidently realizing that the remark had not been particularly consoling.

"I liked him at fust," admitted Bald Head regretfully, "but many's the time sence then as I've thought o' killin' of him. An' then I've thought o' killin' Maude. An' sometimes, messmates, I've thought o' killin' th' two on 'em. But th' way them fellers love that baby, ye might jest as well commit suicide in th' beginnin' an' have th' job over with."

"Wot ye haven't thought of," said a hoarse, gloomy voice behind them, "be to milk Maude yerselves when I ain't a-lookin'." And Piggy himself sat down and stared sullenly at the ocean. "I'll learn ye th' trick on't," he added in a husky whisper, "an' if there ain't no milk for th' baby, who's to blame and wot's to save him? An' all I axes be a half share o' th' milk."



DOTING PIRATES SAT IN THE NICE RED ROCKING-CHAIRS
AND WATCHED THE TENDER INFANT BUSILY SLID-
ING CHECKERS OFF THE DOMELIKE CRANIUM
OF THEIR BALDEST COMRADE

Twice more the pirate Piggy had milked the cow Maude — and now in the cozy sitting-room five doting pirates, rapidly reverting toward normal humanity under the refining influence of a tender infant, sat in as many nice red rocking-chairs and watched the tender infant busily sliding checkers off the domelike cranium of their baldest comrade. It was a charming but hypocritical picture. For Bald Head sat on his haunches in front of Mutton Chop (who held Captain Kidd), and Yellow Mustaches crawled gracefully over the floor and recaptured the checkers. And out in the moonlit pasture Maude ate butter plant and wondered sleepily how many more times that day she was likely to be milked.

Suddenly voices rose passionately in the kitchen ; the door opened, and Piggy appeared so hastily that they hardly knew him — but, quick as he was, Red Whisker was hardly one one-thousandth of a second behind him. Twice the pirate chief pursued the flying milkman around the table, leaping the promptly vacated red rocking-chairs one after another, and Captain Kidd stopped sliding checkers off Bald Head's cranium to enjoy the performance. Evidently he considered it something novel and acrobatic, got up for his especial benefit and rehearsed in private until they could do it without upsetting a single rocker.

"Wot's he been a-doin' of, Whisker?" asked Yellow Mustaches, as he put his wicked head far under the sofa in anxious pursuit of a checker. "Ef ye don't look out, ole feller, you an' Piggy'll excite Cap'n Kidd so's he won't be able to sleep a wink, bless him!" And he said it so naturally that only Mutton Chop, Bald Head, and Piggy could have caught the irony.

Red Whisker stopped short. He looked at Yellow Mustaches under the sofa and then at Captain Kidd in his

high chair. Twice he essayed to speak, and twice he hesitated — for had he not himself said that this baby understood every word that was spoken in his presence? Now that he had stopped running, they could all see that his strong right hand gripped a twelve-inch ruler dripping with milk.

“H-e s-t-e-a-l-s t-h-e b-a-b-e apostrophe s m-i-l-k, capital Y-e double-l capital O-h exclamation point capital M-u-s-t capital A-s-h capital S,” he spelled indignantly; and such was his excitement that he spelled out even the words that it would have done Captain Kidd no harm to fathom. “T-h-e g-double-o-d c-o-w g-i-v-e-s m-i-l-k f-o-r t-h-e c-h-i-l-d a-n-d t-h-e b-a-d m-a-n t-a-k-e-s i-t t-o d-r-i-n-k w-i-t-h r-u-m.”

Happily unintelligible to Captain Kidd, the horrid accusation was all too plain to the remaining listeners. Four genuinely and three hypocritically indignant faces turned toward Piggy, who, to the baby's intense delight, had climbed over the melodeon and now stood in a posture of defense behind it.

“No man can make a c-o-w give m-i-l-k that s-h-e has not got,” he replied earnestly. “K-i-double-l me, if you will, Red Whisker, but I will die game.” And the brave fellow unhooked the picture of Susanna and the Elders from the wall and prepared to brain with it anybody who might attack him.

“If you k-i-double-l Piggy, Red Whisker,” said Yellow Mustaches quietly, “who will m-i-l-k capital M-a-u-d-e?”

“A c-o-w dries up,” explained Piggy over the melodeon. “An' ef ye don't believe me, messmates, ye can all come to-morrow an' see me m-i-l-k.”

Obviously this was a fair suggestion, and the pirates nodded at each other approvingly. As for the baby, understanding nothing of this skilfully veiled discourse,

and doubtless believing that the show was over, he put another checker on Bald Head's cranium and crowed with pleasure as it rolled off on the carpet.

Red Whisker returned gloomily to the kitchen, and one after another the four motherly pirates cautiously followed him. The milk-pail stood in the sink, and Red Whisker was carefully dipping from it into the baby's bottle.

"Two inches o' milk in th' cussed pail, messmates," he said with painful decision, "ain't a-goin' to keep th' leetle feller busy an' contented-like till th' next milkin'. I hates to fool him, but we jest got to put somethin' else in it." And he looked despairingly into the pail, and then from one to another of the worried, sin-stained faces that now surrounded it.

But not one of them answered. Each looked intently into the milk-pail (as if desire might somehow increase its piteously meager contents) and then indignantly at Red Whisker (as if he were somehow responsible). Had they known anything about the acutely determined formulas that have to-day carried to such scientific perfection the obvious fact that a baby is not a calf and that the natural food of a calf must be properly modified or humanized before being fed to a baby, they could have settled the matter without much difficulty. They would have known for example, that two ounces of top milk, thirteen ounces of boiled water or perhaps of thin gruel, and two even teaspoonfuls of sugar of milk were just what they needed ; and they would, of course, have mixed and put the formula in ten separate bottles, one and a half ounces in each, which they would have fed to Captain Kidd every two hours during the day, and twice during the night. They did not even know that milk should be pasteurized and that they might have fashioned themselves a home-made pasteurizing apparatus out of a tin pail, a pie-plate, and a chemical

thermometer. All that the wretched but affectionate fellows did know, in fact, was that babies drink milk — and, with Captain Kidd to judge by, they would have indignantly denied the theory that the milk of any one cow is undesirable for any one baby.

“Wot’s th’ matter o’ fillin’ of th’ bottle up with rum ?” suggested Nose Ring, desperately. “Piggy he says as rum an’ milk be a mixture to make yer mouth water, an’ mebbe th’ leetle feller ’d like it better ’n th’ raw milk.”

But Red Whisker frowned down the proposal. “Rum is fer growed men like you an’ me, Nose Ring,” he said severely, “but it ain’t fer babies. Wot we’ve got to do, messmates, be to di-lute it with jest water, warmin’ of it up a leetle so’s it will seem like it were part o’ th’ cussed milk.”

It was not until after breakfast that Piggy usually attended to the morning milking, and the sun was high when they left Captain Kidd cuddling his full but deceitful bottle and set out for the pasture. Red Whisker led them, grimly carrying his twelve-inch ruler. Solemnly, sadly, and in a portentous silence they surrounded Maude in the grateful shadow of a castor-oil tree, and watched their suspected comrade as he arranged his milking stool.

“Th’ way ye do it,” said Piggy proudly, “is to be calm an’ stiddy, an’ jest play as yer two hands were two leetle calves a-suckin’. An’ then, fust thing ye knows, there’s a little tinkle in th’ pooty milk-pail —” he spoke confidently — and a mellow, liquid sound justified him. Maude was being milked — and Yellow Mustaches, Bald Head, and Mutton Chop exchanged quick glances of surprise and mortification. Three strong men as they were, last night they had failed to milk this cow dry ; and now — whichever one of them might be to blame for it — they had again failed this morning. They hardly dared

look at each other — and they were quite unable to look at Piggy. If they had, they might have drawn some comfort from the fact that he at least was not discomfited.

For however much the two tarry hands of the pirate may have resembled two little hungry calves, the milk came slower and slower — and then stopped completely. Let the little imaginary calves starve — there was no more milk for them. In that solemn silence, broken only by the contented music of a cow chewing her cud, Red Whisker bent over the milk-pail and inserted the ruler.

“Two inches o’ milk!” said Red Whisker, bitterly. “She’s a-goin’ dry, mess-mates. But she ain’t dry yet,” he added bravely, “an’ wot we’ve got to do now be to put to sea an’ buy another pooty cow o’ th’ fust vessel as happens to carry one.”

“Buy?” echoed Yellow Mustaches. “Did I hear ye say ‘buy,’ Whisker?”

“Ye heard me say it,” replied Red Whisker briskly. “Wotever we gets fer *that* leetle feller, Yaller Mustaches, we gets fer him honest an’ like a respectable family.”

“Packet ahoy!” shouted Red Whisker. “Have ye got sech a thing as a cow?”

At this unexpected question, anxiously hurled from vessel to vessel in mid-Atlantic, the lady and gentleman passengers of the New-York-to-Liverpool packet *Amity* exchanged wondering glances. All that morning, with the famished curiosity that makes any sail at sea so almost feverishly interesting a spectacle, they had been watching the *Tender Polly* steadily overhauling them; and about forty times (or twice for each passenger) Captain Jonas Trench had politely assured them that he did not know

who she was, where she came from, or what she wanted.

But even without the schooner most of them would have been on deck and almost feverishly excited. Tuesday they had seen a porpoise ; Monday some of them said they had seen a whale ; to-day they had all hoped to see some tragic memento of the packet *Sunflower*, abandoned two months ago in this very neighborhood — a catastrophe all the more vividly remembered because the *Amity* was herself carrying three survivors back to England after a brief visit to a brother-in-law in Philadelphia. Business reasons, it appeared, had compelled this brother-in-law, a Mr. Jenkins, to immigrate to the States only a few months after his marriage to Miss Dora Pattern, and an untimely chill, thoughtlessly neglected, had forever prevented Mrs. Jenkins from joining him.

No such interesting memento, however, had yet been visible — nothing, in short, but this lively schooner which had now crossed their path and come up into the wind at a little distance.

"We carry a couple of 'em for the passengers," Captain Trench replied briskly. "What ye want of a cow?"

"We wants to buy her," bellowed Red Whisker. "Matter o' life an' death, 'cos we've got to have m-i-l-k. Money ain't no object. Name yer own price, cap'n, but fer th' love o' humanity sell us a pooty leetle cow." And beside him a tall man, evidently a gentleman by his stylish garments, and a foreigner (probably a Greek or Italian) by his shining nose-ring, held up an object that all aboard the *Amity* recognized as a human baby. A few snickered — young, thoughtless males, who little suspected that they would some day be fathers — but every lady passenger uttered a twittering exclamation of surprise and pleasure ; and, of whatever age or sex, they were a unit in begging

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RED WHISKER, ONE HAND ON THE RAIL AND CAPTAIN
KIDD IN THE OTHER, HAD BOUNDED LIGHTLY OVER
THE BULWARKS

Captain Trench to stop his vessel. Possibly the thought of naming his own price for a cow helped them. The *Amity* came into the wind, and all her interested passengers scampered like chickens to the starboard bulwarks.

Meantime, aboard the schooner, Yellow Mustaches, Piggy, Bald Head, and Mutton Chop lowered away the jolly-boat, and none but Maude would have guessed, to see them, that their tanned, capable hands were also responsible for this impending milk famine. Heartless as they were, and skilful milkmen as they must by this time have become, the critical reader is doubtless surprised to find that Captain Kidd was still living. But this reader does not know pirates and their total incapacity to carry out any plan, however atrocious, that interferes with their own selfish enjoyment. Little by little the sight of Piggy at his milk and rum, with a pinch of sugar and a shaving of nutmeg, had aroused their fiendish curiosity ; they, too, had tried it — and now a cow was quite as necessary to these evil men as it was to the baby. And they knew that if Maude dried up altogether she would be killed and devoured. Frankly and baldly stated, they had agreed to preserve Maude, and yet by slow stages reduce Captain Kidd's milk to a fatal minimum ; and a new cow would simply prolong this treacherous process and provide more material for milk-punch. They licked their wicked chops to think of it as they pulled toward the packet. Red Whisker, steering with one big hand and balancing Captain Kidd on his knee with the other, thought them smiling to see the little rascal tugging affectionately at those famous whiskers.

A moment later Nose Ring stood on the deck of the *Amity* ; Red Whisker, one hand on the rail and Captain Kidd in the other, had bounded lightly over the bulwarks ; and several cooing lady passengers had promptly taken

Captain Kidd away from him. Unlike the Misses Pattern, these lady passengers had lost no moment of the spectacle by hurrying below to dress for company.

The foreign-looking gentleman raised his tall hat with a gesture that revealed a nursing bottle in the inside pocket of his frock coat. Then he bowed so deeply that his nose ring almost hit his forehead.

"Cap'n an' ladies an' gentlemen all," he began suavely, "this be my baby, as has lost his poor marma an' is a-travelin' with me fer his health, bless him! *This* good man," he continued with a condescending jerk of his thumb toward his companion, "has been kind enough to allow us passage aboard his vessel, me an' Cap'n Kidd —"

"Wot he means," interrupted Red Whisker hastily, "be as how I takes th' *kid* aboard, as his parpa calls him, an' buys a pooty cow to feed him out of. But th' cow ain't workin' th' way a cow oughter." He glanced anxiously at the baby and lowered his voice to a hoarse whisper. "Every time we milks Maude we gets le-double-s m-i-l-k. Wot we needs bitter hard be a new cow. An' we've brought th' leetle feller with us to try th' milk an' see how he likes it."

Coming from this hardy seaman, such consideration for a tender child could hardly fail to impress his hearers. He might be rough, they told each other in significant glances, but ah! the tender, honest heart of him! You read about these lovable characters, but how seldom you meet them! The lovable character swelled visibly as he saw the impression he had created. But, even as he swelled, three shrill, astonished, and delighted screams burst from the cabin hatch and floated tremulously away toward Europe and America. The Misses Pattern, their toilettes completed, rushed from the cabin and clasped Captain Kidd impetuously to their three bosoms. Fortu-

nately he was well used to being roughly though affectionately handled, for now they laughed and again they sobbed hysterically ; and yet again — the three in a circle with Captain Kidd extended on six arms between them — they held the cunning little creature at arm's length and gazed at him with devouring affection.

"Those eyes !" cried Miss Amy. "So like his dear mother's !"

"That nose !" laughed and sobbed Miss Caroline. "The Pattern nose !"

"The Pattern mole on his sweet little left shoulder-blade !" gurgled Miss Priscilla, rummaging triumphantly — and then all together they fell to kissing Captain Kidd till he howled piteously for mercy.

Truly it was an interesting morning on the packet *Amity*. And at that moment, when some passengers, trying simultaneously to see Red Whisker, Nose Ring, the Misses Pattern, and Captain Kidd, saw them all in a kind of rainbow-edged blur, and other passengers, trying to appear calm and collected, told each other hurriedly that this pretty child must be that very David Jenkins whom his three aunts, taking him out to his father in the States, had somehow left behind when they fled from the sinking *Sunflower* — at such a moment it is really no wonder that Nose Ring forgot himself. The jig, in his opinion, was up ; and without a thought of how little such an act was like a father, he scrambled hastily over the bulwarks and dropped into the jolly-boat.

As for Red Whisker, he cast one quick and flaming glance around the deck and instinctively felt for his cutlas. Alas ! he had none. Such had been the refining influence of Captain Kidd on these savage natures, such the anxious haste in which they had put to sea to buy a c-o-w, that every pirate weapon had been left in the arsenal on Non-

such Island. And once captured, with *his* reputation as a pirate, outraged humanity would make short work of him. His quick imagination painted a limp but handsome red-whiskered gentleman pathetically suspended from a well-deserved gallows. His dismay betrayed him.

"Lower away the stabbord quarter-boat!" shouted Captain Trench. "Overhaul that man with the nose-ring! Clear the gun tackle forrard and sink 'em if they don't heave to peaceable! And as for you, my hearty," he added, coldly, turning his eye on Red Whisker —

It was a cold glance wasted. Cow or no cow, baby or no baby, Red Whisker knew that now or never this fatal limelight must be turned in some other direction until he gained his own unarmed but uncatchable schooner. If he hung back now he would be hung up afterward — and the resourceful pirate leaped upon the three aunts, gathered them, baby and all, in his strong arms, tottered with his precious burden to the port bulwarks, and hurled it vigorously overboard. It was the work of a single instant, quick, decisive, and stupefying. Instinctively every man and woman (except those who had fainted) rushed to the port bulwarks — and straight through them Red Whisker sprang expeditiously back across the deck and dived headlong from the starboard side of the vessel.

"Lower away the *port* quarter-boat!" shouted Captain Trench. And, followed by several of the braver gentlemen, he tore off his coat, unlaced his shoes, and leaped heroically after his endangered passengers.

Fifteen minutes later Red Whisker stood in the stern of the flying *Polly* and watched the carpet of green water widen rapidly between the two vessels. He was a sad, wet pirate. Something seemed to have gone out of his